METRO / A17

Bongbong Marcos claims ownership of Payanig sa Pasig

BUSINESS / B1

RP stocks continue record-breaking run; positive outlook fuels buying

ACROSS / A14

Priest out as head of gov't peace panel negotiating with MILF

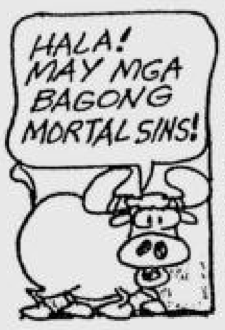
WORLD / A20

Salman Rushdie's knighthood triggers diplomatic furor

WORLD / A19

BBC man marks 100 days in Gaza captivity

Vatican issues unusual document for drivers


HALA! MAY MGA BAGONG MORTAL SINS!

VATICAN CITY—GOT road rage? The Vatican on Tuesday issued "Ten Commandments" for drivers, telling motorists to be charitable to others on the highway, to refrain from drinking and driving, and to pray you

VATICAN/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, June 21, 2007 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 193 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

"LEGACY PHASE" is how President Arroyo calls her last three years in office at the Palace lunch.

LYN RILLON

BIR chief blames firing on GMA's economic team

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Michael Lim Ubac and Michelle V. Remo

AFTER A WEEK OF SPECULATIONS, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday fired Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag over his agency's failure to achieve its collection target.

Buñag is the first agency head to be replaced after the President asked the officers and directors of 117 government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) to resign in the first wave of a post-election revamp.

Ms Arroyo announced her decision during a luncheon with top executives of newspapers, television and radio networks in Malacañang.

Buñag, who declined an offer to serve as ambassador to Switzerland or the Netherlands, told reporters that he was put on the chopping block for the "bungled" policies of Ms Arroyo's economic team led by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves and Trade Secretary Peter Favila.

"Well, I know that he (Buñag) was

BIR CHIEF/ A6

GMA seeks media help

Says her last 3 years in office legacy phase

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

AFTER SURVIVING TWO IMPEACHMENT attempts, a mutiny and other political challenges, President Macapagal-Arroyo wants to spend her last three years in office creating a "legacy," before bowing out in 2010 after nearly 10 years in power.

With the incoming 14th Congress a month away, Ms Arroyo yesterday said she would focus on the economy and would not be distracted by politics from achieving that legacy.

And she asked the media to help her achieve her goal.

Ms Arroyo invited top newspaper, television and radio executives, including Philippine Daily Inquirer publisher Isagani Yambot, to a luncheon meeting at the Aguinaldo State Dining Room to discuss her programs for the remainder of her term.

She said there were a lot of things to do in the next three years.

"The good news is we now have the economic momentum, fiscal strength and international confidence to achieve our potential as a nation," she said.

"The media can help the government and the country reach a new plane of development, stability and reform by balanced reporting based on verified facts, constructive commentary on public issues, and editorial focus on news that matters to the lives and livelihood of ordinary Filipinos."

For the past two years, the Arroyo administration has been lurching from one crisis to another, hounded by the "Hello Garci" tape scandal, allegations about her family's supposed links to "jueteng" (illegal numbers game) operators, and supposed military involvement in the extrajudicial killings of political activists.

The "Hello Garci" tape dealt with supposed wiretapped conversations between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on how to manipulate the results of the 2004 presidential election.

Despite denials by Ms Arroyo and Garcillano of connivance in poll cheating and Malacañang's appeal for a closure, the "Hello Garci" issue has bedevilled her presidency, provoked unrest within the military and sent her popularity rating plunging, from

GMA/ A6

TASK FORCE MAG
JUNE 20 2007
ST ASI ALE
GEN. S CIT

FACT-FINDING MISSION: Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos (center) and Nicodemo Ferrer (left) look over the summary statements of votes and certificates of canvass submitted by Maguindanao election officers to Comelec Regional Director Michael Abas (right). Twenty-one of 22 municipal election officers attended the fact-finding meeting held in General Santos City.

EDWIN BACASMAS

TU, GO feud over Maguindanao vote sizzles

By Nikko Dizon and Leila B. Salaverria
in Manila

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—OPPOSITION lawyer Leila de Lima scanned the election documents, saw the zero votes and said, "This is revolting."

Administration lawyer Romulo Macalintal inspected the same documents and said they looked authentic.

The weeks-old battle for the last Senate slot between Genuine Opposition's Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III and Team Unity's Juan Miguel Zubiri shifted to General Santos yesterday when a Commission on Elections fact-finding mission flew to this southern city to retrieve controversial vote tallies that could decide who between Pimentel and Zubiri would sit in the Senate.

But it may be another week of heart-stopping wait before the Comelec issues its ruling.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos said it would only be next week when the Comelec en banc would decide whether to reconstitute a special provincial board of canvassers to retabulate the tallies.

TU, GO FEUD/ A6

Wyeth: Rust only outside milk cans but contents safe

By Tarra Quismundo and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

MULTINATIONAL GIANT WYETH yesterday called on consumers to continue trusting its infant formula products, saying the rust and mold that prompted a recall of millions of units of some of its products were "a packaging issue."

"Let me reassure parents throughout the Philippines that the Wyeth infant formula products your children are receiving are of the highest quality," Wyeth medical director Nerissa Calimon said in a press conference held yesterday, or 11 months after the company first learned of the problem.

In a statement, Wyeth promised to comply with the order of the Bureau of Food and Drugs to recall from the market millions of cans of its Bona, Promil Kid, Promil and Progress Gold products.

The company said tests it had conducted showed that "the milk powder inside the affected cans

WYETH/ A8

Esperon asks court to rule on Trillanes custody

By DJ Yap, Christine O. Avendaño and Juliet Labog-Javellana

HAS THE DETAINEE BECOME too hot to handle?

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. yesterday asked the Makati Regional Trial Court to rule on who should have custody of military rebel-turned-senator Antonio Trillanes IV.

Esperon asked Judge Oscar Pimentel of Makati RTC Branch 148 in a letter dated June 19 to clarify where Trillanes should be detained. The former Navy lieutenant is charged with coup d'etat before Pimentel's court in connection with the Oakwood mutiny of July 2003 and is being held at the Marine brig in Fort Bonifacio.

Esperon said the AFP was "ready to abide" by the court's mandate.

"… Considering his change of status from a military officer to a civilian, the question has arisen whether the senator-elect continues to be subject to confinement in a military detention facility," Esperon said, pointing out that since he filed his certificate of candidacy, Trillanes was deemed resigned from the AFP effective Feb. 6 and has become a civilian.

Esperon also said that should the court decide to transfer Trillanes' custody to another body, it should issue an order requiring the senator-elect's presence before the AFP general court-martial, where he is accused of conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman.

Judge Pimentel said he might need until next month to resolve

ESPERON/ A7

10 YEARS AFTER CRISIS

Recovery of Asian regional economies remains uneven

(First of three parts)

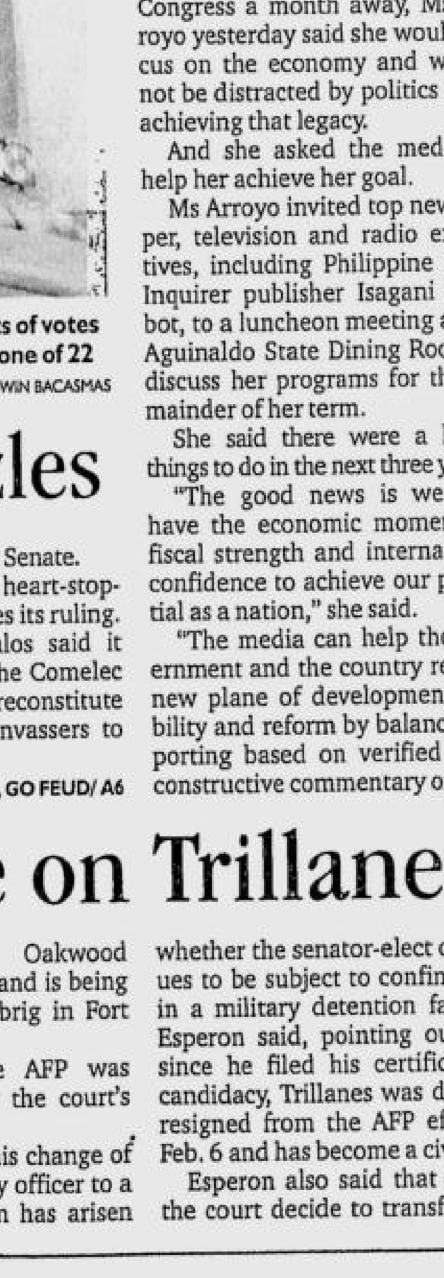
SPECIAL REPORT

BANGKOK—TEN YEARS AGO, A plunge in the Thai baht sparked a wave of recessions across Asia's high-flying economies, bankrupting entire nations, putting millions out of work and shaking markets around the world. Some feared that a decade of growth would be lost.

Today, the region as a whole has bounced back from the 1997-98 crisis and is better equipped to deal with financial emergencies. Banking is more transparent, corporations are better managed, poverty rates have dropped and the region's collective economic growth has doubled.

Still, the recovery has been uneven. The three countries hit hardest by the crisis that began

RECOVERY/ A8



TEN years ago when the plunge of the Thai baht sparked the Asian crisis, Sirivat Voravetvuthikun was wiped out financially. He survived by selling sandwiches. AP

RP-China papers on controversial $329-M deal stolen

By Fernando del Mundo

SHADES OF LINTANG BEDOL!

Documents on the much-criticized $329.5-million contract between Manila and Beijing that was to launch the Philippine bureaucracy into cyberspace were stolen hours after it was signed in the Chinese resort of Hainan on April 22.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had left her husband's sickbed and had flown to Boao in Hainan for a 12-hour visit to witness the signing of several trade agreements worth more than $1 billion, including the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

RP-CHINA/ A7

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Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening

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(All in exact order)

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Central and Southern Luzon and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH/06/20/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Put up or shut up, JDV dares rival

By Christian V. Esguerra and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE BATTLE FOR THE HOUSE speakership continues to gather steam.

His bid for a historic fifth term challenged, Speaker Jose de Venecia yesterday reiterated his call for a moratorium on the "vicious and poisonous" campaign among contenders for the House leadership.

De Venecia, however, all but lived up to the appeal.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, he was in a fighting mood, saying he was up against a "full-scale family dynasty" in the other top contender for the speakership, Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia.

"I'm fighting not only him, but also his son and daughter," he said, referring to the lawmaker's son Winston, head of the Government Service Insurance System, and daughter Gwendolyn, Cebu governor.

"If he (Garcia) has 124 signatures, I will stand up and move for his election as Speaker and I will then withdraw," he said in a statement. Later, he told the INQUIRER that Garcia and his allies should either "put up or shut up."

But Garcia, 81, yesterday sustained his attack on De Venecia, saying the Pangasinan lawmaker should "stand in front of the mirror and preach to himself about civility, deceit, double-dealing and betrayal."

DE VENECIA

GARCIA

"Joe (de Venecia) preaches about civility as he attacks my family," he said in a statement. "He and his allies call for a ceasefire while engaging in outright black propaganda against us. If that is not hypocrisy, I don't know what it is."

Winston Garcia had earlier filed a libel suit against Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante, a staunch supporter of De Venecia, for alleging that GSIS money had been used to "fund" the elder Garcia's campaign for speaker.

De Venecia's allies in the House retaliated by demanding Winston Garcia's resignation in the wake of Malacañang's call for heads of government owned and controlled corporations, including government financial institutions, to tender their courtesy resignation.

Meanwhile, fireworks are expected at the annual membership meeting next week of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Kampi party, where Interior and Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno is reportedly planning to wrest the presidency from Albay Rep. Luis Villafuerte.

Three separate sources from the party told the INQUIRER that Kampi members allied with Puno also met with Sen. Joker Arroyo two weeks ago at a Quezon City restaurant to convince him to take over as chair of Kampi and avert a potential clash with its ally Lakas-CMD over the House speakership.

Villafuerte is backing the bid of Garcia to end House Speaker Jose De Venecia's four-term reign in the lower house.

Miriam: Unity in opposition? That's illusion

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE NEXT SENATE PRESIDENT will be chosen by a coalition of administration and opposition senators as has been the "established pattern" in the chamber, said administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Santiago yesterday dismissed the reported secret balloting that the victorious opposition is planning to choose the next Senate President, saying it was born of "illusion and hope."

"Tying down a senator's right to cast his vote is like attempting to domesticate a wild bull. It can't be done and it might backfire in the sense that the bull might turn around and gore his tormentors," she said.

Some opposition senators, claiming to have 13 senators in their camp, announced earlier that they would hold a secret ballot tomorrow to choose between Senate President Manuel Villar and Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. to support for the post. They said that the opposition senators were bound by an agreement to vote as a bloc for whoever wins the secret ballot.

Serious doubts

Santiago seriously doubts that Villar or Pimentel would hold up their end of the bargain.

"Unity in the opposition is only a hope, not a reality. There is no written document, and even if there were, it would not be legally binding. You can't go to court to enforce a so-called gentleman's agreement, especially among politicians," she said in a statement.

She noted that neither Villar nor Pimentel has "declared that he will voluntarily follow the purported agreement."

"It would be anomalous to bind two senators who are not parties to the agreement. Senators Villar and Pimentel will have to speak for themselves," she said.

SANTIAGO

Santiago said the group putting forward the secret ballot idea was mistaken in assuming that the opposition was "monolithic."

"In an ideal world, the opposition should remain united. But this is an illusion, because Senate history shows that after the elections, every senator believes himself to be a free agent," she said.

She said that although the opposition can count on nine members, it would still need to convince two independent senators to join the bloc—Senators Francis Pangilinan and Gregorio Honasan.

At least 12 senators are expected to attend the secret balloting—the seven winning candidates of the Genuine Opposition, including Villar, and incumbent senators Pimentel, Manuel Roxas, Rodolfo Biazon, Jinggoy Estrada, and Jamby Madrigal.

Secret balloting

This has given the group pushing the secret ballot—Senators Panfilo Lacson, Biazon and Estrada—the confidence to proclaim that the opposition would hold the majority in the 23-member chamber when Congress reopens on July 23, giving it the numbers to elect the next Senate President and parcel out the committee chairmanships.

Stay put, labor leader urges GSIS head

THE HEAD OF A LABOR FEDERATION YESTERDAY urged Winston Garcia, the president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System, to resist calls for his resignation in the light of the heated fight for the speakership in the House of Representatives which his father is contesting.

Dave Diwa, president of the National Labor Union, said in a press statement that Garcia should not resign amid allegations that he was using GSIS funds to fund his father's speakership bid because "he has succeeded in bolstering the pension fund's total consolidated assets to P400 billion—the highest among government and private corporations."

NLU is the umbrella organization of labor unions espousing social security, particularly the protection of pensioners' funds.

Diwa said he opposed the demand of congressmen allied with Speaker Jose de Venecia that Garcia should resign as GSIS chief in accordance with President Macapagal-Arroyo's call for all officials of government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) to resign.

He issued the statement after several of De Venecia's allies in the House called for the GSIS chief's resignation for allegedly using "the clout and resources of his office" to gain support for the speakership of his father, Rep. Pablo Garcia of Cebu.

The younger Garcia had refused to comment on the allegations.

Diwa said the President's call for the resignation of government corporate officials to resign was intended only for those who have failed in their mission to improve the performance and the financial positions of the GOCCs that they are managing, and not for those who have succeeded in their mission to serve the public well.

Citing the report of the Commission on Audit, Diwa said that the total consolidated assets of the GSIS had reached the unprecedented level of P411.19 billion as it celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. In terms of net income, the pension fund recorded a 2.6 percent growth from P40.49 billion in 2005 to P41.56 billion in 2006, he averred.

"Never before in the history of the GSIS had the government employees' pension fund been healthier," Diwa said.

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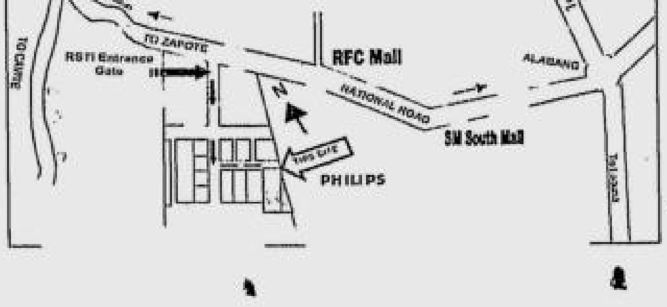


5 militant party-list groups ask Comelec to nix Lanao votes

By Jerome Aning

FIVE MILITANT PARTY-LIST GROUPS YESTERDAY asked the Commission on Elections not to tabulate the party-list results from Lanao del Sur province, citing alleged vote-padding and other irregularities.

The complainants—Bayan Muna, Gabriela, Anakpawis, Kabataan and Suara Bangsamoro—cited alleged discrepancies in the certificates of canvass and in the election results from 21 municipalities and Marawi City, the provincial capital.

Neri Colmenares, the complainants' lawyer, said total votes cast for the party-list election ranged from 400 to 1,100 in certain precincts, which they said overshot the total number of registered voters in these precincts by 500 percent, in some instances.

The complainants presented sample election returns from the precincts which they said showed not only 100-percent turnouts in the party-list voting but also the number of actual votes cast exceeding the total number of registered voters.

More votes than voters

In the town of Lumba Bayabao, they said 18 precincts had a total of 3,353 votes cast in the party-list elections even if the precincts had only a total of 2,282 registered voters.

In Bayang, one precinct came up with a total of 630 votes cast in the party-list election when it had only 210 registered voters, according to the complaint.

One precinct in Madamba town had 1,878 total votes cast for the party-list polls while another in Ditsaan Ramain town had 1,220.

Under election laws, a precinct has a maximum of 200 voters. Another precinct is created for new voters.

For practical purposes, however, a new precinct with less than 200 voters is often merged with its mother precinct and both are served by a single board of election inspectors.

According to Colmenares, the alleged padding will affect the two-percent vote threshold for the party-list system, making it difficult for party-list groups, especially the smaller ones, to get the required two percent of total votes cast.

Defective documents

"To canvass these votes is not only illegal and violative of elections laws and canvassing rules, but is also destructive to the party-list system whose two-percent threshold will be increased and unjust to many party-list groups which got their votes through legal means," Colmenares said.

Since comparing the CoCs and the statement of votes (SoV)—which enumerate vote results in each town in words—cannot resolve the alleged fraud, the lawyer said a mere re-tabulation on the basis of SOV by precincts would not suffice.

In the interest of justice, the provincial CoC of Lanao del Sur should be excluded as "it does not reflect the real votes of the people of Lanao del Sur for the reason that source documents themselves are defective, altered and tampered with through massive vote padding and shaving in the province," the complainants said.

The party-list votes cast in the province should also not be added to the nationwide total, from where the two-percent requirement for winning party-list groups would be determined, they said.

Under the Constitution, a party-list group that obtains at least two percent of all party-list votes cast is entitled to one seat in the House of Representatives.

Italian envoy offers to negotiate for Bossi

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—ITALIAN AMbassador Rubens Anna Fedele yesterday offered to personally negotiate with the abductors of Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi as the hostage crisis entered its 12th day.

"If the kidnappers are afraid to talk to the police because the police can arrest them, or if they are afraid of the Army because the Army can shoot at them, if they don't want to talk to the civilian authorities because they don't trust them, then I am here," Fedele told the INQUIRER.

Fedele said his line is open to everyone.

"We want them to give us three conditions. We are not interested on who they are. We are not interested to know the reasons why they did it," Fedele said.

The Italian envoy also said he would remain in this city until he gets more details on the situation of Bossi, who was seized on June 10 by armed men in Payao town, Zamboanga Sibugay.

"I will stay here waiting ... I am not going back (Manila) until I know anything," Fedele said.

Fedele said he wanted to know: "How is the condition of Father Bossi, his health? Are those keeping Father Bossi, are they really the holders of Father Bossi? If they are really kidnappers, what do they want, what are their conditions to release him?"

Fr. Luciano Benedetti, a hostage victim himself, is also monitoring updates on Bossi.

Benedetti, who like Bossi belongs to the order of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (Pime), recalled that when he himself was abducted in September 1998, he made some efforts to reach out to his Pime family through his abductors regarding his health problems.

His abductors eventually agreed that medicines and other basic items be sent to him.

But in Bossi's case, Benedetti is somewhat puzzled why "not a single communication has been established" since the kidnapping last June 10.

Bossi, according to Benedetti, is suffering from high blood pressure.

"Despite being athletic, Father Bossi is already old," he said. Long walks could be stressful to Bossi, making his Pime family here more worried.

Fr. Gianni Battista Sandalo, Pime's Philippine Regional Superior, said they are concerned with Bossi's health.

In a separate interview, Fedele lauded efforts made by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Task Force Bossi chief Col. Jovencio Magalso and Zamboanga Sibugay police chief Senior Supt. Francisco Cristobal.

"They are doing much more than they can do. No complaints from my part to the work of the two colonels and even some MILF officials who are very helpful in this case. They have communicated and have given me information, but I cannot be satisfied until I see Bossi with us," Fedele said.

But Eid Kabalu, spokesperson of the MILF, which is helping government troops in pursuing the kidnappers, said that the Italian government or the Italian envoy has never communicated with them.

"It appears that they are not interested," Kabalu said.

Probe set on ill effects of LPG use in taxis

HEALTH SECRETARY FRANcisco Duque III yesterday proposed the formation of a government team to look into still unconfirmed reports about the ill effects of using liquefied petroleum gas as fuel in taxis.

He told reporters that a team composed of members from the health department, the science and technology department and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board should look into the matter.

He said that while the allegations are "speculative and are not evidence-based," they would look into reports of "drivers complaining about difficulty in breathing, of weakness, of dryness of the sinuses and the throat." *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

RP urged to curb human trafficking

THE PHILIPPINES REMAINS A source, transit and destination country for men, women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced labor, according to a United States annual report on human trafficking.

"The Philippine government should make greater efforts to combat internal trafficking by increasing public awareness activities and vigorously prosecuting those exploiting victims as well as making greater efforts to prosecute and convict public officials who profit from or are involved in trafficking," said the 2007 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report conducted by the US State Department, which was released last week.

The TIP, the seventh so far, is the most comprehensive report on the efforts of governments worldwide to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons.

The report said the Philippines remained on the Tier 2 list, which groups countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards set by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, though they are making significant efforts do so.

The TVPA, which was passed on Oct. 28, 2000, is the most comprehensive US law to address the various aspects of trafficking in persons, internationally and domestically. It aims to combat trafficking by establishing measures to prevent trafficking, protect its victims, and prosecute those accountable for trafficking.

The report noted the anti-trafficking efforts of the Philippine government in assisting migrant workers, but said these were not enough to prevent trafficking and protect those who were exploited abroad.

The report placed 16 countries in the bottom Tier 3, in which are listed the worst offenders, those that have shown no commitment to meeting international standards. Among those placed in this category were Burma, North Korea, Sudan and Uzbekistan.

Tier 1 countries are those doing the best job of controlling human trafficking, prosecuting those involved, and supporting and assisting trafficking victims. Hungary, Slovenia and the Czech Republic are newcomers to the Tier 1 group. *Cynthia D. Balana*

UN honors RP 'blue helmets'

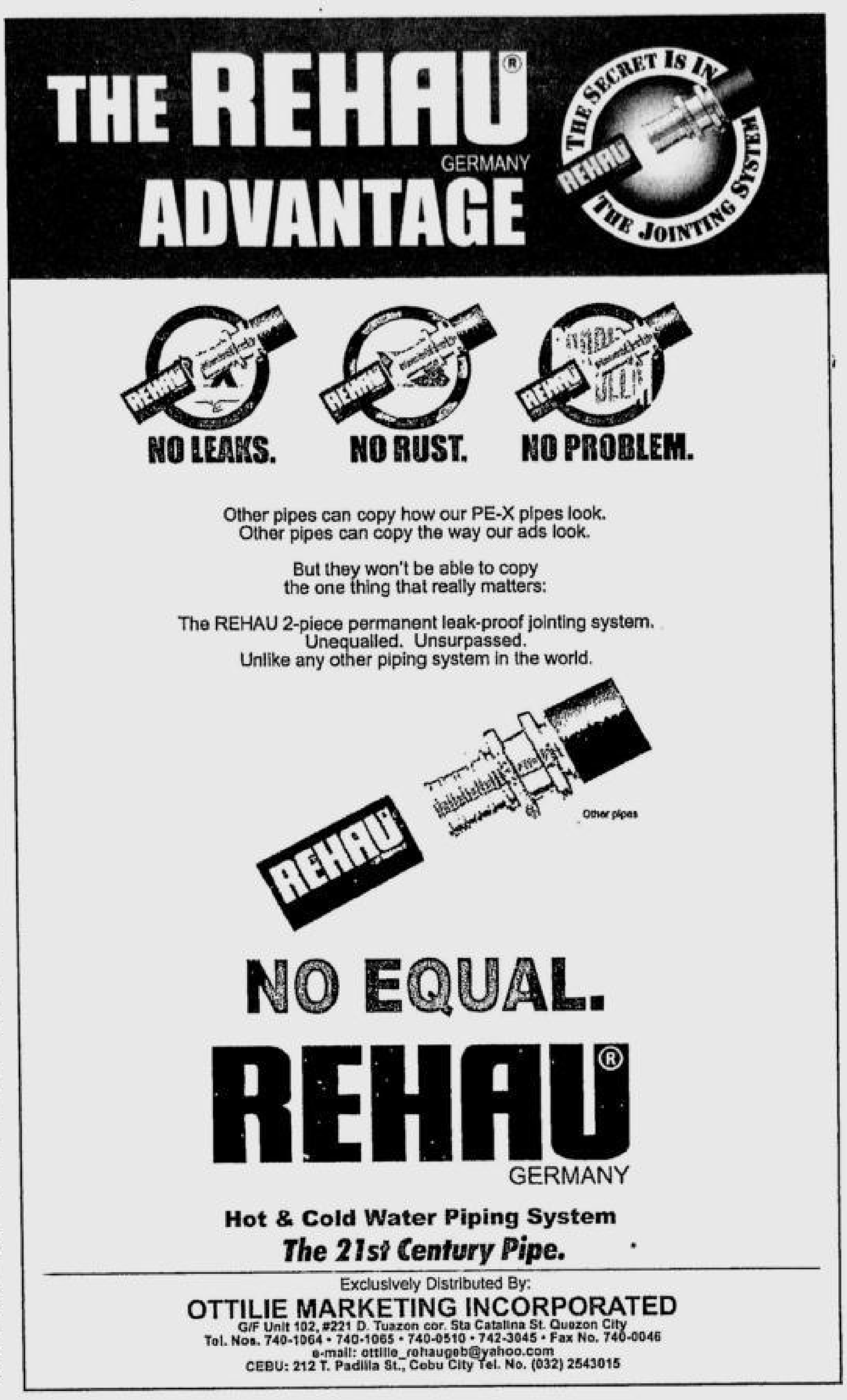
THE UNITED NAtions has awarded medals to 155 Filipino peacekeepers in Haiti in recognition of their contribution to the reestablishment of peace and stability in that country, Ambassador Hilario Davide, Philippine permanent representative to the UN in New York, said yesterday.

In his report to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Davide said the peacekeepers were members of the Philippine contingent to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (Minustah).

The awarding ceremony was held at the contingent headquarters in Haiti on June 12, which coincided with the Philippine Independence Day, and was witnessed by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Edmond Mulet and Minustah Force Commander Gen. Carlos Alberto Dos Santos Cruz.

Cruz expressed his gratitude to the Philippine contingent for their "professionalism, engagement and spirit of sacrifice" with which they have contributed in achieving progress in the security situation in Haiti.

For his part, Mulet said the ceremony was a proof of UN recognition of the "risks the Philippine 'blue helmets' have taken and the efforts they have made towards establishing peace and security in Haiti." *Cynthia D. Balana*



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Goodbye Lipo, Hello Ultrashape!

Ultrashape – Lipo Without The Suction continues to make waves in the slimming industry since its official launch in Manila early last year. Tagged as the first non-invasive breakthrough in body contouring, Ultrashape uses an ultrasound beam to breakdown and liquefy fats from outside the body. Promising an average reduction of about 2cm in just one treatment, it effectively reduces fat deposits on multiple body areas such as the tummy, flanks and thighs.

A small amount of fat reduction is just not worth undergoing surgery for. Liposuction usually involves massive body contouring, and is often not recommended when only a few inches of fat have to be removed. Thus, for the majority of people who only need a few touch-ups, Ultrashape offers a much safer alternative. It gives the benefits of liposuction without the risks or side effects, surgical scars and downtime. The result: Smooth, even and shapely curves you can flaunt even without your clothes on!

Due to its increasing popularity, demand for Ultrashape is high often resulting to fully booked appointment schedules from its growing roster of clients. These women have testified – they have finally found the best alternative to liposuction!

Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo, 38

"When Ultrashape was offered to me, I was excited! Ultrashape concentrates on that last hard-to-lose fat that remains in your body even after you've lost weight. I told myself, at last, there was a chance to lose all that stubborn fat that just wouldn't seem to go away. The doctor explained that Ultrashape destroys the fat cells in the targeted areas like my stomach and thighs. From there, the fat is metabolized and burned naturally by my body as energy. The treatment takes an hour and a half and is done once a month.

Ultrashape is really the perfect finishing touch for people like me who have lost weight but still have some lumps and bumps. After my first treatment, I immediately said to myself 'wow, it's perfect!' Ultrashape definitely has all the benefits of lipo minus the surgery and all the risks! There's no downtime whatsoever. So you see, liposuction is unnecessary."

Lyn Ching-Pascual, 34

"What intrigued me about Ultrashape is the claim – the easy treatment you can have in your lunch break. Apart from that, a friend of mine said that her friend tried Ultrashape as soon as it came out in the market. And she immediately lost 2 inches in just one month! Ultrashape promises an average of about 2cm, that's true, but it's also possible for someone to lose even more than that too. That's why for me, even if liposuction was the only weight-loss treatment available, I'd rather walk up a building 100 times than have an operation because I don't want the possibility of dying for vanity.

With Ultrashape around, everyone now gets a better slimming option. Since it's non-invasive, I've got nothing to worry about. After trying it firsthand, I was like, 'Is this real?!' I just walked in, got the treatment and after an hour, I was on my way back to work again! It's as if nothing happened. The best part was, I could feel my tummy flatten only after a few weeks! No doubt it's the perfect way to trim down excess fats!"

Cristina Gonzalez-Romualdez, 42

"Nothing really compares to Ultrashape. When I tried it, I immediately lost 4cm in my tummy after only 1 session! Imagine what a couple of sessions more can do! Diet pills and crash dieting don't work for me. With my catering and events business, I can't just turn my back from tasting and savoring my own menus. More so, if it's lipo we're going to compare Ultrashape with, lipo doesn't even come close to it as far as safety is concerned. Besides, with Ultrashape around, why would anyone still want to settle for liposuction?! I must be very desperate or I must be so fat that I could no longer move before I'd consider getting it done. I just find it too dangerous!"

Undeniably, Marie France's Ultrashape is solid proof that the trends in slimming now slant towards the approach that's safer yet as effective. After going through a weight-loss program, it is highly recommended to continue with Ultrashape treatments right after. It's the best final touch-up in getting rid of remaining stubborn fats in the body. For booking schedules, call Marie France now at 894-BODY (2639).

Taysan, Batangas voters boycott special election

By Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon

TAYSAN, BATANGAS—STILL REELING FROM the burning of their school and the death of three poll workers, residents of Barangay Pinagbayanan boycotted yesterday's special elections despite the presence of at least 100 heavily armed police and soldiers.

By the time polling places closed at 3 p.m., none of the 1,188 registered voters at the six precincts in Pinagbayanan Elementary School (PES) had shown up to vote.

This was a far cry from the 1,105 voters who cast their votes in the violence-marred May 14 elections.

Residents and election officers said the grim effects of the torching of the school by armed men in the wee hours of May 15 was to blame for the "failure" of the special elections.

"The people here are still traumatized," said Vilma Ramos, municipal elections officer.

Ramos was referring to the fire that razed six classrooms of the school and killed three people, including guidance councilor Nellie Banaag.

Escorted by soldiers and police, Ramos and the other Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) members arrived at around 6 a.m. for the voting.

Save for the sight of troopers in full battle gear wandering around, it was an ordinary day for the residents of Pinagbayanan as they went about their daily activities without giving attention to the election.

The farming village of Pinagbayanan is connected by 15 kilometers of rough roads to the town center. Other schools did not declare a suspension of classes.

One store owner said there were no reasons for people to vote as the mayoral race had already been decided.

Another resident said casting their vote would only "cause harm on us anyway."

No point in voting

"Why would we vote if we would put our lives in danger?" said the store owner, who begged not to be identified.

Mayor-elect Victor Portugal has been proclaimed winner over incumbent Mayor Hernando Villena by a vote of 8,057 against 6,334.

Another resident, who also declined to be identified, said going to the polling precincts would only evoke terrible memories.

Galileo Banaag, whose wife Nellie was among those killed in the fire, said their whole community's decision not to vote was their "sign of protest" over the misfortune that befell their village.

Banaag's daughter Retchelle herself suffered severe burns during the fire.

Yearning for justice

Banaag said his everyday routine of passing in front of the school was agonizing for him.

"I will not vote again for as long there is no justice for the death of my wife," Banaag said in Filipino, trying to hold back his tears.

Police have filed multiple murder and multiple frustrated murder charges against two members of the elite Regional Special Operations Group (RSOG) of the Calabarzon police who were allegedly behind the burning of the school.

Banaag said stories had been circulating in town about armed men roaming around to warn residents against voting.

Teachers refused to work

Senior Supt. Prudencio Bañas, Batangas police director, dismissed such reports, saying it was impossible for gunmen to go around the village undetected as he had deployed four police teams on foot patrol.

Juanito Icaro, the director of the Commission on Elections for Calabarzon, said the special elections hit a snag immediately after the teachers who originally served as BEI in Pinagbayanan refused to report.

Icaro said this prompted him to create new sets of BEIs composed of 18 different municipal elections officers from other towns.

He said the teachers were apparently still frightened by what happened on May 15.

Icaro said although the special elections would not affect the hotly-contested mayoral and vice-mayoral race, they would influence the composition of the town council.

Palace set to clarify revamp plan

By Michael Lim Ubac

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO ERMITA said he would release a written directive from the President, possibly today, spelling out the extent of the government reorganization and hopefully put to rest the confusion and uncertainty that it has spawned.

At his regular press briefing yesterday, Ermita said he had sought "guidance" from President Arroyo on the coverage of her instructions "that all heads of GOCCs and GFIs (government-owned and -controlled corporations and government financial institutions), including heads of agencies, must submit their resignation."

Ermita admitted he himself was unsure whether the directive—verbally given by Ms Arroyo on June 9—included agencies which are not under line departments, or those agencies or GOCCs which fall under the supervision of special departments.

He said the reorganization would give the President a "free hand" to reorganize her administration, which has three years left to fulfill its promise to "break the cycle of poverty" in the country, among other economic and political goals.

So far, only 19 of the 117 GOCCs and GFIs have tendered their resignations, he said.

Asked about the appointees' hesitance to comply with the verbal directive, Ermita said: "It's slow in the sense that they have not received any written official communication from the Office of the President."

Two drafts

Ermita prepared two drafts of the memo containing appointed positions to be covered by the revamp.

"We're getting a clarification whether indeed the President meant to include the heads of such agencies which are not under the direct supervision of a line department," he said.

Examples of those agencies which are not directly under any line Cabinet, or a department, are the Movie Television Review and Classification Board, which is under the Office of President, Philippine Reclamation Authority, National Food Authority, Philippine Economic Zone Authority, National Electrification Administration and Office of Government Corporate Counsel.

NEW TERM
Sworn in for his second term as senator is Senate President Manny Villar with Chief Justice Reynato Puno administering his oath of office at the Supreme Court. ROGER MARGALLO

Puno seeks reforms in judicial selection

By Leila B. Salaverria

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO PUNO yesterday said reforms being considered for the Judicial and Bar Council could bring about an improvement in the selection process for filling up vacancies in the courts.

"I know that the present system in the JBC is not perfect. It has resulted in some appointments that do not make us entirely happy," he said at the Quijano de Manila forum.

The JBC, a constitutional body that makes recommendations for judicial appointments to the President, was formed in order to minimize the politicization of the judiciary, according to Puno.

He noted that there were moves to either transfer the JBC's powers back to the congressional Commission on Appointments, or to strengthen its internal system.

Among the proposed reforms is for the JBC to adopt a point system for choosing nominees to make the selection process less subjective, Puno said.

Under this proposal, the factors considered in the selection process would be categorized and assigned specific points.

"If this system is followed, there will be less subjectivity in the choice of the nominees," Puno said.

Puno also said the system of voting for nominees at the JBC be made open instead of secret.

"This way perhaps there will be more transparency and more exercise of responsibility on the part of the members," he said.

Puno, the ex-officio chair of the JBC, said he hopes the proposed reforms can be approved in a month.

Aside from the chief justice, the JBC has seven other members, including the justice secretary and a representative from the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The chief justice's statements came even as the appointment of Sandiganbayan Justice Gregory Ong, whom Malacañang has appointed to replace retired Associate Justice Romeo Calleja, remains on hold because of questions over his citizenship and thus, his qualification to serve in the high tribunal.

'Where's Jalosjos commutation order?'

By Tarra Quismundo

MORE THAN A WEEK HAS PASSED since Malacañang announced the commutation of convicted rapist Romeo Jalosjos' double life sentence, but his victim's lawyer has yet to see the document, adding to her growing suspicion about the order.

"I am suspicious why to date no one has seen it in black and white. Nobody has seen the commutation order, not me, not a private lawyer, not members of the media," said lawyer Katrina Legarda.

"It's either that the Board of Pardons and Parole didn't recommend a commutation or recommended a higher number of years still to be served...and then Malacañang decided to set its own term," she said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita announced last week that President Macapagal-Arroyo had cut Jalosjos' jail term from two life sentences to 16 years.

Legarda criticized the decision as being a return for past favors, claiming that the Jalosjos family of Zamboanga del Norte had helped Ms Arroyo win elections in the province and contributed money to her election campaigns.

The Board of Pardons and Parole, an agency under the justice department, has the authority to recommend a pardon or jail term commutation. Malacañang has the prerogative to approve or reject the board's recommendation.

Legarda said about the only thing known of the commutation order was what Ermita said when he announced it.

"Nobody can make an intelligent interpretation out of it," she said.

Malacañang has said that the commutation of Jalosjos' sentence had nothing to do with politics but was based on the former congressman's good behavior.

Jalosjos, 66, was convicted in 1997 for two counts of statutory rape and six counts of acts of lasciviousness. His victim was an 11-year-old girl.

He was initially sentenced to two life terms and was ordered to pay P400,000 in civil indemnity and P400,000 in moral damages.

As of May 30, Jalosjos has already served, with allowance for good behavior, a total of 13 years, 5 months and 15 days, prison sources said.

Corrections

IN THE JUNE 20 ISSUE, the headline of an article published on Page A11–"Metro water dirty, says St. Luke's test"–erroneously implied that St. Luke's Medical Center had said the water supply in various parts of Metro Manila was contaminated. It was Qualibet Testing Services-not St. Luke's-that conducted the study of water supply in Metro Manila. Neither Qualibet nor St. Luke's made any statement on the purity of the water supply in the entire Metro Manila.

***

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an article published on Page A5—"GMA backs freeze of dubious funds"—mistakenly stated that daily transactions involving P500,000 or more are considered "suspicious" under the Anti-Money Laundering Act. Such transactions are called "covered transactions" under the law.

***

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Metro water study was not commissioned by St. Luke's

ST. LUKE'S MEDICAL CENTER clarified yesterday that it did not commission the tests that found tap water in several parts of Metro Manila—from slums to posh villages—to be contaminated with disease-causing bacteria and fecal matter.

In a letter to the INQUIRER, SLMC Senior Vice President Christine F. Liwanag wished to correct the headline published in the June 20, 2007 issue which said "Metro water dirty, says St. Luke's test."

"SLMC has never commissioned Qualibet Testing Services or any other laboratory facility to test the water quality in Metro Manila," Liwanag wrote.

The controversial report on water quality was made by the private testing service, Qualibet, based on tap water tests done for walk-in customers in various parts of the metropolis over the past three months.

Pinky Tobiano, head of Qualibet, yesterday also reiterated that "the problem could be with connections inside compounds and houses, where water distributors no longer have control."

Tobiano appeared at a health forum on Tuesday sponsored by the Philippine College of Physicians where she revealed that water samples from some faucets in Tondo, Parañaque, Calcocan and even Forbes Park and Corinthian Gardens in Quezon City were found positive with E. Coli bacteria. In some faucets in Mother Ignacia, Quezon City, fecal matter were found in quantities above the safe level.

SLMC Food and Nutrition Manager Ma. Luisa Rivera also appeared at that same forum said the best way to ensure water safety was to boil water for threeminutes.

Utility firms Manila Water and Maynilad Water Services both denounced the Qualibet report, saying their water was "very clean" and "above standards."

PSALM Power Sector Assets & Liabilities Management Corporation

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES MANAGEMENT (PSALM) CORPORATION wishes to announce its new address:

7th Floor BANKMER BUILDING
6756 AYALA AVENUE, MAKATI CITY 1226
Telephone number (632) 8938202

PSALM Power Sector Assets & Liabilities Management Corporation

Republic of the Philippines

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

for the

Lease of Photocopying Machines for PSALM Corporation

1. The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation, through its 2007 Corporate Operating Budget intends to apply the total sum of **EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTY EIGHT THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (Php888,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Lease of Photocopying Machines for PSALM Corporation. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the lease of six (6) units photocopying machine. Delivery of the GOODS is required as indicated in the **Bid Data Sheet** of the Bidding Documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to R.A. 5183. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **ITB**. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure. Bids must cover all the items indicated in the Bidding Documents.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **ONE THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (Php1,000.00)**. The method of payment will be either cash or check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **02 July 2007 at 10:00 AM** at the 6th Floor, Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **16 July 2007 at 10:00 AM**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of cash, cashier's check, irrevocable letter of credit (1% of the ABC), Bank guarantee (1 ½% of ABC) or Surety Bond (2 ½% of the ABC). Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **16 July 2007 at 10:15 AM** at the 6th floor, Bankmer Building, 6756, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
9. The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation
HELENA C. TOLENTINO
7th Floor, Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel: (02)8405046 ; Fax: (02)8930699
e-mail: *hctolentino@psalm.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) **HELENA C. TOLENTINO**
BAC Chairperson

(PDI–June 21, 2007)

Milk Code issue a simple one, says SC chief justice

By Leila B. Salaverria

PUNO

THE ISSUE SURROUNDING THE DEPARTMENT of Health's milk code is not complex and would not take a long time to resolve, Chief Justice Reynato Puno said yesterday.

Puno said the high tribunal would only deal with the constitutionality of the code's revised implementing rules and regulations (IRR) that, among others, prohibits the advertisement, promotion or marketing of materials and activities for breast milk substitutes intended for infants up to two years old so as not to undermine the government's effort to promote breast-feeding.

Puno said the issue was confined essentially to the validity of the DOH's revised rules and regulations implemented on the basis of the milk code and supposedly on the basis of international covenants to which the Philippines is a signatory.

The milk companies under the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) contested the rules, saying the DOH had no authority to expand the scope of the milk code as it was formulated by Congress. The code covers children up to 12 months old, but the revised rules expanded it to include children up to two years old.

The Supreme Court had earlier issued a temporary restraining order against the revised rules. On Tuesday it heard oral arguments from the PHAP and the DOH, then gave the parties 30 days to submit memoranda containing their positions.

Not complicated

"It will not be too long, the issues are not that complicated... We have sufficient jurisprudence to rule on this kind of dispute. Certainly, it's not a case of first impression," he told reporters yesterday in an ambush interview after the Quijano de Manila forum.

According to the chief justice, the milk code case was an important issue considering that it involves public health and has "far-reaching implications." He noted that international organizations like the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization are interested in the matter as well.

PHAP lawyer Felicitas Arroyo argued that the milk companies also believe in the benefits of breast-feeding but were contesting the DOH's expansion and amendment of the scope of the milk code.

She also said the milk code's revised IRR hampered the public's right to information and encroached on their freedom to choose between breast-feeding or not. The revised rules would lead to financial losses for the milk companies, she added.

Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera, arguing on behalf of the DOH, said the revised rules were meant to fulfill the department's duty to safeguard and promote Filipino children's health.

The DOH has noted a decline in breast-feeding despite studies showing that breast-fed babies are generally healthier and are less likely to contract certain illnesses. *With AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, June 21, 2007
11th Week in Ordinary Time
Aloysius Gonzaga

1st Reading: 2 Cor 11:1-11
Gospel: Matthew 6:7-15

Jesus said to his disciples, "When you pray, do not use a lot of words, as the pagans do, for they hold that the more they say, the more chance they have of being heard. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need, even before you ask him.

"This, then, is how you should pray:
'Our Father in heaven,
holy be your name,
your kingdom come
and your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts
just as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us.
Do not bring us to the test
but deliver us from the evil one.'

"If you forgive others their wrongs, your Father in heaven will also forgive yours. If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you either."

Commentary

Paul is having trouble with the Corinthians. He has been supported by the poorer church of Macedonia so he can minister and preach to those at Corinth. And they listen to anyone who comes along—easily seduced into other forms of belief/teaching. He pleads with them, telling them of what he has tried to do for them freely (the gift of other believers) and that he loves them. But they are a stubborn and slow people.

Jesus teaches us the core of what we believe by teaching us to pray as he prays to God our Father. That God's kingdom may come as it is in fullness, born of hope and freedom now. Daily bread, care for all today. And so we must trust day to day as we share what we have with others so all may have as they need. Forgiveness as graciously and as often as our Father forgives us. Know that we will be tried, and pray for courage to face it and go through it and pray for faithfulness now and at the end of our lives. It is simple—intent on God's will and way and our submission. Let us pray…

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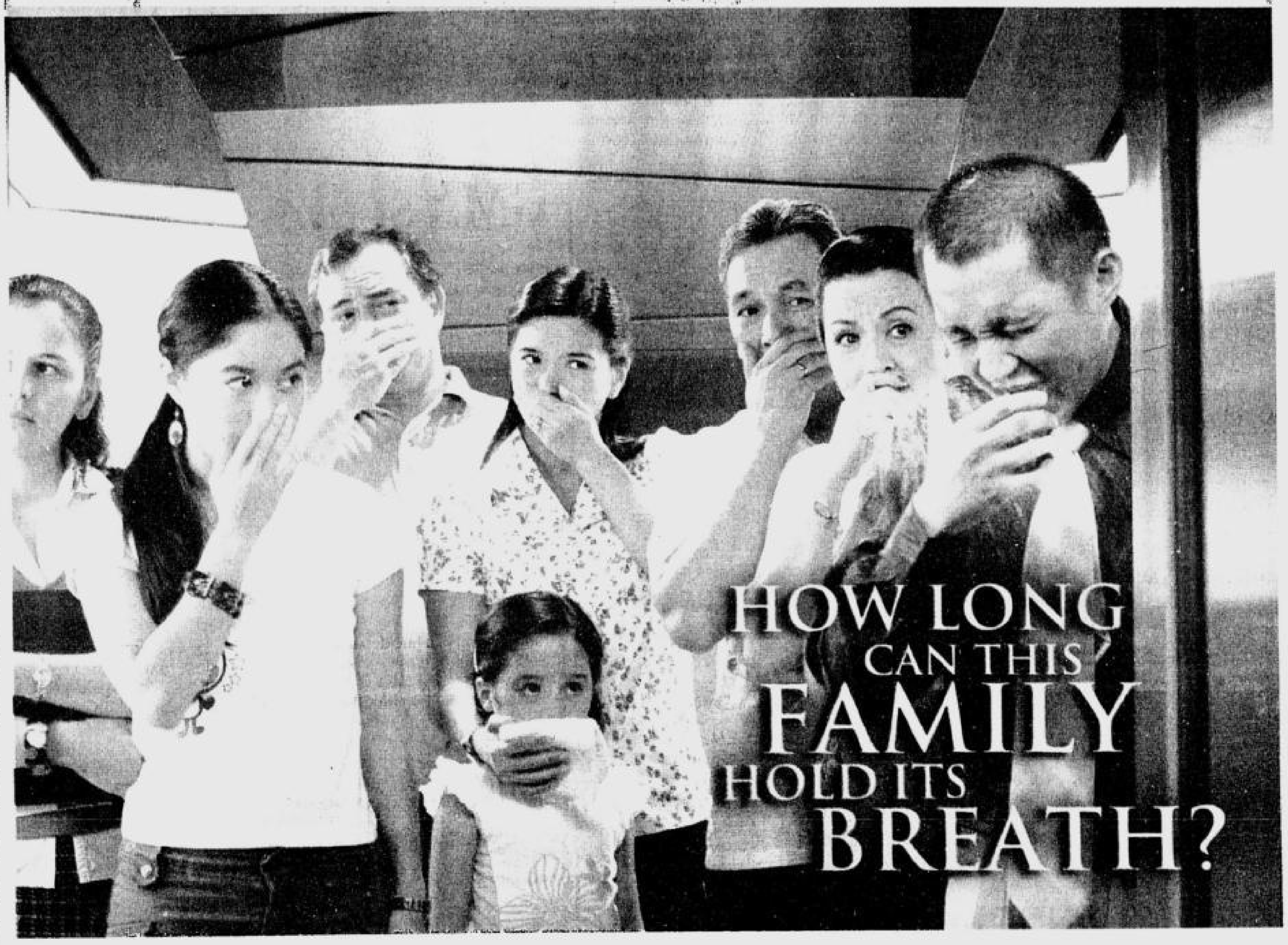

INFLUENZA. A SINGLE SNEEZE TRAVELING AT A SPEED OF 600 MILES PER HOUR MAY CARRY ABOUT 100,000 INFLUENZA VIRUS CELLS. THESE STUBBORN CELLS CAN STAY ALIVE IN A ROOM FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES. EVENTUALLY, THEY COULD ENTER YOUR BODY THROUGH YOUR MOUTH, EYES OR NOSE.

Now, think about it, whom do you share a room with?
Or to put it another way, with whom do you share the air you breathe?

Influenza can infect anyone just by breathing the same air an infected person breathes.
Moving too fast, every member of your family might be infected before you know it.

This highly contagious disease called Influenza is commonly misconceived as "just a Flu" or the common cold.
The truth is, it could lead to serious complications like Bronchitis, Pneumonia, heart failure, and ultimately, death.

Fortunately there is a vaccine that can protect you and your family from this threat.
Get yourself and your family vaccinated against the Influenza virus.

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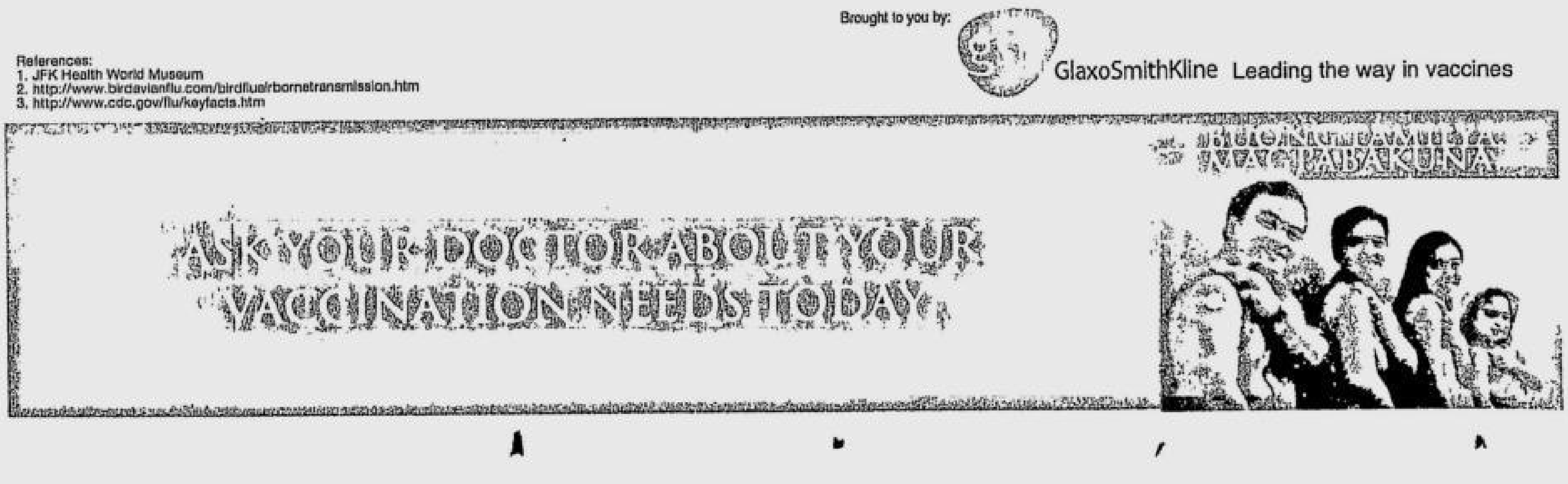
References:
1. JFK Health World Museum
2. http://www.birdavianflu.com/birdfluairbornetransmission.htm
3. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm



BIR chief blames firing on GMA's economic team

From page A1

asked to resign and as a matter of fact, you might say that this is part of the instruction of the President to (ask for) the submission of resignations of the GOCCs and the GFIs," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in his press briefing.

Ermita said the President designated BIR Deputy Commissioner for Operations Lilian Hefti as officer in charge.

"There are higher authorities in the government's financial institutions who would like to wash their hands of responsibility for the dire consequences of their unrealistic, failed and bungled policies, and who look for a sacrificial lamb and a scapegoat to which they can assign the blame," Buñag said in a statement to the INQUIRER.

"So be it. Their time to answer for their failure and incompetence will also eventually come," Buñag stressed.

'We have tried our best'

"I am grateful to the President for having given me the opportunity to have served the government," Buñag said. "Although the task of tax collection is very difficult and intricate, dependent upon variables in economic development and growth, as well as the accuracy of the estimated collection goal, we have tried our best to meet the administration's expectations."

According to Buñag, the BIR in 2006 exceeded by 22 percent the collection of the previous year.

"We also surpassed our real collection target by P30 billion," he said.

The sacking of Buñag has been expected after Teves said last week the President had expressed concern about "slippages" in the BIR's tax collection. Ms Arroyo even created a new office to help improve tax collection.

Tax collection shortfall

During the Independence Day reception in Malacañang, Buñag denied that he had resigned and said tax collection in the first two quarters of the year was even higher by 10 percent.

But Teves said the BIR's collection was short by P9.5 billion as of March.

Besides Buñag, Palace sources said, another official likely to get the ax was Efraim Genuino, chair of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. He reportedly received an angry call from Ms Arroyo for his failure to provide financial support to the administration's Senate campaign.

BUÑAG: I am the sacrificial lamb.

Study on tax shortfall

On Tuesday, the Department of Finance presented a study analyzing the tax collection shortfall.

Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran said that while some macroeconomic factors adversely affected tax collection, as Buñag had tried to point out, these had only little effect on the shortfall. Inefficiency was largely the reason, he said.

In setting the BIR's collection target, the government assumed that inflation would hit 3.3 percent in the first quarter, but the actual rate stood at only 2.7 percent. It was also assumed that interest rate on government securities would average at 5.3 percent, but it only settled at 3.6 percent.

A slower-than-expected inflation adversely affects the BIR's ability to meet its collection target on value-added tax on goods and services. A lower-than-assumed interest rate results in lower taxes on income from bank deposits.

The study said that GDP growth for the first quarter was assumed to have reached only 6.1 percent, but it actually settled at 6.9 percent. Higher economic growth means higher income by households and businesses, and should, therefore, result in higher tax collection.

Bank deposits, securities

The DOF also said bank deposits and the volume of government securities sold were higher than expected. This should give a positive impact on tax collection, it said.

The BIR was tasked with collecting P155.2 billion in the first quarter, but it turned in only P143.1 billion. From January to May, it collected P285.6 billion in taxes. This means that it still has to generate P87.7 billion in June alone just to meet the first-half goal of P373.3 billion.

Due to the lower-than-expected tax collection, the government breached the budget deficit ceiling it set for the first quarter. The budget gap for January to March hit P52 billion, higher than the ceiling of P45.8 billion set for the first quarter.

Deficit limit

The first-quarter ceiling was consistent with the goal of hitting a full-year budget deficit of only P63 billion, lower than the P64.8 billion last year.

The DOF said the government had made a commitment to limit the deficit to P63 billion this year and would still stick to that figure.

The government was able to reduce the deficit to P64.8 billion last year from a high of P146.8 billion the previous year. The large deficit cut led to better outlook on the Philippines by credit rating agencies.

But the country's foreign creditors and ratings firms said the Philippines needed to prove it would be able to sustain its fiscal gains last year to be able to get a better credit rating, which affects a government's cost of borrowings.

IN THE KNOW

Lilian Hefti

LILIAN HEFTI, THE DEPUTY commissioner who has been appointed as officer in charge of the Bureau of International Revenue, has been with the agency since 1978.

HEFTI

Born on Oct. 8, 1955, in Albay, Hefti obtained her BS Business Administration and Accounting degree from the Aquinas University of Legazpi City, and a law degree from San Beda College.

She placed fifth in the 1976 board examinations for certified public accountants and third in the 1985 Bar exams.

In her nearly three decades of service to the bureau, she has been a revenue examiner, a revenue enforcement officer, a technical assistant, an executive assistant, a chief revenue officer and a director. She has also worked with the bureau's legal section.

Manila Water service upgrade in Mandaluyong City

Manila Water will conduct service improvement projects which will cause temporary water supply interruption in the following portions of Mandaluyong City:

Schedule: 10:00 p.m., Thursday, June 21, 2007 up to 4:00 a.m., Friday, June 22, 2007.

Affected areas: CIW and NCMH Compound, Barangay Pleasant Hills, Mauway, Malamig and Plainview.

Manila Water Company is advising all residents of the said areas to store enough water to supply their needs during the interruption.

We want to serve you better.

These service improvement projects are necessary to ensure safe and reliable water supply for our East Zone customers.

Manila Water

(PDI – June 21, 2007)

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) announces the opening, for application, of the following positions:

A. The position of ASSOCIATE JUSTICE of the COURT OF APPEALS vacated on 19 June 2007 upon the compulsory retirement of HON. RENATO C. DACUDAO. Applications or recommendations for this position must be submitted **NOT LATER THAN July 2, 2007**, to the JBC, 2nd Floor Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. No. 552-9512; Fax No. 552-9598; e-mail address **jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph**).

B. Judgeship positions in the following courts:

NCJR
PASAY CITY
RTC, Br. 231
QUEZON CITY
RTC, Br. 107

REGION I
LA UNION
RTC, Br. 66,
San Fernando City

PANGASINAN
MCTC, Br. 9, Tayug-San Nicolas

REGION II
CAGAYAN
MTCC, Br. 1,
Tuguegarao City

REGION III
BULACAN
MTC, Br. 1, Balagtas

REGION IV
BATANGAS
RTC, Br. 9, Balayan

CAVITE
MTC, Imus
ROMBLON
MTC, Romblon

REGION VIII
LEYTE
RTC, Br. 25,
Maasin City

REGION XI
DAVAO ORIENTAL
RTC, Br. 6, Mati

Applications or recommendations for these positions must be submitted to the JBC on or before JULY 20, 2007. Applicants or recommendees for positions in A and B must submit 6 copies of the following:

Application or Recommendation Letter
Personal Data Sheet (JBC Form 1 dowloadable from the JBC Website)
http://jbc.supremecourt.gov.ph)
Proof of Filipino Citizenship
ID Picture (2x2)
Certificate of Good Standing or latest Official Receipt from the IBP National Treasurer
ITR for 2 preceding years
Clearances from NBI, Ombudsman, Office of the Bar Confidant and employer
Transcript of School Records
Police Clearance from place of residence
Certificate of Admission to Bar (with Bar Rating)

June 20, 2007.

MaVillarama
MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court & JBC
Ex Officio Secretary

(PDI–June 21, 2007)

GMA seeks media help

From page A1

which she has yet to recover.

The President said her dialogue with the trimedia executives should "strengthen our collaboration to achieve full freedom and a better tomorrow for our people."

To start off the lunch, Ms Arroyo told the media executives she had asked them to come "because we begin a new phase of my administration, which is the legacy phase."

"We would like to share with you what we'd like to do to move forward and to ask for your support so that we can achieve all the things we want to do in the next three years."

Present were executives of broadcast giants GMA 7 and ABS-CBN, ABC 5, government networks NBN 4, IBC 13, RPN 9, the Iglesia ni Cristo's Net 25, radio stations dzBB, dzMM, dzRH, RMN, dwIZ and Radyo ng Bayan, broadsheets INQUIRER, Manila Bulletin, Manila Standard Today and the Philippine Star; and tabloids Ang Pilipino Star Ngayon, Tanod, Tempo and Balita.

Focus on economy

Ms Arroyo asked her key Cabinet officials to help her explain her pro grams during the lunch.

They were Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus, Health Secretary Francisco Duque, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, Presidential Management Staff chief Cerge Remonde, Philippine Information Agency Director General Dodi Limcaoco and Secretary to the Cabinet Ricardo Saludo.

Ms Arroyo said her "focus on the economy" led to a record-breaking 6.9-percent growth in the first quarter, record highs for the stock market, a strong peso and a reduction in the unemployment rate.

Strong fundamentals

"I try my best not to be distracted by politics," Ms Arroyo said in her opening statement. "And so we're continuing this kind of work and mind-set and we have some key Cabinet members here so that we can share with you some of the things that we'd like to do for the next three years."

During the dialogue, Bunye said the economy had reached a new level of maturity and stability, adding: "We are witnessing some of the strongest macroeconomic fundamentals in a decade."

"But it is not time to rest," she said. "Rather, we are committed to forge ahead and sustain the momentum."

Trickle-down effect

Bunye said that to instill "permanent change" during the next three years, Ms Arroyo "intends to make long overdue investments in human and physical infrastructure."

He pointed out that National Economic and Development Authority chief Romulo Neri reported unemployment had gone down from 8.2 percent in April last year to 7.4 percent in April this year.

Neri also said the underemployment rate likewise dramatically declined.

"We see this as the start of the trickle-down effect which will ultimately improve the lives of our people, " Bunye said.

The media executives were invited to ask Duque questions on the administration's health programs, Lapus on reforms in the education sector, and Remonde on microfinance.

Billions for bridges

Bunye said Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza would be "spending billions on bridges, roads and ports to upgrade the competitiveness of the Philippines."

"These will, in turn, assist Secretary Peter Favila attract more foreign investments which will create more jobs," Bunye said.

Malacañang's media offensive comes four weeks before Ms Arroyo faces a joint session of the 14th Congress to deliver her State of the Nation Address.

While keeping her hold on the House, which is dominated by her allies, Ms Arroyo is faced with an opposition Senate.

So far, only two candidates from her Team Unity (TU) have made it to the new Senate—reelectionist Senators Joker Arroyo and Edgardo Angara. A third TU aspirant, Juan Miguel Zubiri, is trying to topple opposition candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel from the 12th and last seat. *(See related story on Page A1.)*

TU, GO feud over Maguindanao ...

From page A1

The board could also decide to exclude the tallies if it found them to be dubious, lawyers said.

"By Tuesday at best, we would have resolved the issue on whether we would reconstitute the (board)," Abalos said in a press conference.

"Hopefully, we (will) meet the June 30 deadline," he said, referring to the date when the terms of office of 12 senators would expire and the newly elected 12 would take their places.

Speedy action

The disputed vote tallies came from Maguindanao, where voting on May 14 was allegedly marred by fraud in some areas, but the hearing was held here for security reasons.

In Manila, Chief Justice Reynato Puno pledged speedy Supreme Court action on a petition which Pimentel said he would file seeking to stop the Comelec from canvassing the Maguindanao votes.

"We shall await the filing. This case will be immediately raffled to a justice for study and I assure all parties that the case will be given preferential attention considering the interest of the people that is involved, as well as the time element," Puno told reporters.

Pimentel was initially expected to file his petition yesterday but postponed it for today, saying he could not make it to the 4:30 p.m. filing cutoff.

Lawyers for Genuine Opposition (GO) and Team Unity (TU) tangled over the authenticity of the municipal certificates of canvass (MCoCs) when they were presented to the Comelec team by Maguindanao poll officials.

The certificates showed zero votes for several senatorial candidates, just like the provincial tallies presented to the Comelec in Manila last month by Maguindanao provincial election supervisor Lintang Bedol.

Abalos said the Comelec "was satisfied that we found something."

"As to their authenticity, it will be the PBoC which would determine this, not us," Abalos said.

Abalos and Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer, who heads the Task Force Maguindanao investigating body, presided over yesterday's hearing.

Police with long firearms stood guard outside a function hall where the hearing was held while a handful of Zubiri's supporters rallied across the street, urging the Comelec to count the Maguindanao votes.

'Respect our votes'

"Respect the Muslim votes!" and "No to disenfranchisement!" their placards read.

De Lima looked irked after seeing the documents.

"The results are still statistically improbable. There are still zero votes. Those documents were newly manufactured. This is revolting," she told reporters.

De Lima said she noticed that the printed names in the MCoCs were in the same handwriting.

She explained that she expected the election officers to submit the fourth copy of the MCoC, which was supposed to be the document officially in their possession as chairs of the municipal boards of canvassers.

Where's the copy?

"The Comelec said they were looking for the documents in the possession of the election officers. It should have been the fourth copy," De Lima said, stressing that this would be the way to guarantee that the documents were authentic.

De Lima said she asked the election officers where the fourth copies were.

"Their faces were blank and they looked scared," she said.

Macalintal saw no problem with the second copy of the MCoC presented to the Comelec fact-finding mission.

"These are authentic documents, I am sure. Of course, they (the opposition) will say that these are not authentic because the results are not in their favor," he told reporters in Filipino.

According to the Comelec's last official tally, Pimentel leads Zubiri by more than 111,000 votes, without counting Maguindanao.

Lawyers from both camps agree that Zubiri would jump to 12th place if the Maguindanao votes are tabulated. In an unofficial Maguindanao tally shown by lawyers to reporters, Zubiri has 195,823 votes and Pimentel 67,057.

Center of controversy

Maguindanao became a center of controversy after several school teachers in the town of Pagahnganan told media and poll watchdog groups that armed men had seized their ballot boxes and filled out the ballots with the names of TU candidates, to ensure a 12-0 administration win in the province.

Special elections were also held yesterday in several municipalities in four provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao as well as in Pinagbayanan in Taysan, Batangas. *(See story on Page A4.)*

There are an estimated 33,600 registered voters in the contested ARMM areas and 1,200 in Pinagbayanan.

Submitted to Abalos and Ferrer were MCoCs from 21 of the 22 towns of Maguindanao. The election officer from Maguindanao's South Upi did not attend because he was in North Cotabato.

Esperon asks court to rule on Trillanes custody

From page A1

the matter, as he was also expected to rule on the motion for demurrer of evidence that the defense recently filed in the coup d'etat case involving Trillanes and 30 junior officers.

The prosecution has rested its case in the coup d'etat case against Trillanes et al., prompting the defense to file the demurrer.

The motion means the defense believes that the government lawyers did not present sufficient evidence to convict the accused.

"If the demurrer is accepted, the case is considered dismissed. But if it is denied, Trillanes will remain in custody," Pimentel told reporters in an interview.

He said that in the event of the latter, he would have to communicate with the Department of Justice to resolve the question of custody.

"I cannot decide alone in this case because it involves the military," the judge said. He said he would call a hearing on the matter soon, but did not set a date.

Unprecedented situation

AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro denied that Esperon's move indicated a softening of the military's stance on Trillanes, or that it was scared of him.

"There is no such thing," Bacarro said when asked whether Esperon made the move because the military feared the 35-year-old senator-elect.

Bacarro also denied that outside pressure had prompted the AFP to seek the court's ruling, or because some Cabinet officials had wanted lenient treatment for Trillanes.

He said the military wanted a clarification because it was faced with "an unprecedented situation" for which there was yet no jurisprudence to provide guidance.

Bacarro said Esperon had initially consulted with military lawyers, who in turn advised him to seek guidance from Pimentel's court.

"[The move] is also a manifestation that we are recognizing the supremacy of the civilian over the military," he said.

Asked whether the military was only too happy to let Trillanes go, Bacarro said: "I wouldn't say that."

In his letter to Judge Pimentel, Esperon said the AFP had jurisdiction over Trillanes "until final disposition of his case" because the military court had acquired jurisdiction over his person and the charges against him.

Esperon said the military had custody over Trillanes because the latter was facing trial before the general court-martial and because Pimentel's court had directed that he and his co-accused be transferred from Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City to Fort Bonifacio.

On Tuesday night, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the military would seek guidelines from the Makati RTC to find out if Trillanes could be transferred to the custody of the Philippine National Police or the Senate to enable him to perform his senatorial duties.

He said Malacañang would not object if the court allows the transfer of Trillanes' custody out of the military.

"We will respect whatever the decision of the court will be," Bunye said over dinner with INQUIRER editors and reporters. "I think it's a logical move on the part of Esperon to seek guidelines from the court."

Asked if this was a softening of the Palace on Trillanes, Bunye said Esperon was "doing it on his own."

"He wants to get guidelines because he is the custodian, and if you're lax in your duty you could also be held accountable," Bunye said.

At the same dinner at the INQUIRER office, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Defense Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane, who has supervision over the AFP, would also make his recommendation on the matter.

No bail

Ermita echoed Bunye's statement on the possible transfer of custody for Trillanes at his weekly press briefing yesterday.

"His custody is under the authority of Makati RTC Judge Pimentel, and I gathered from the chief of staff that the authority over Trillanes emanates from the judge. Ergo, should the judge feel that authority should be withdrawn for his own reasons, then I suppose the military would just have to turn over the person of Senator Trillanes to the disposition of the court," Ermita told reporters, adding:

"What happens after that, I cannot tell you, because only the judge would have better judgment. Suffice it to say now that he is charged with a capital offense that is not bailable."

Ermita also said people were already speculating that the Senate would raise before higher courts the issue of Trillanes' freedom to fulfill his senatorial duties.

Amnesty possible

Asked if President Macapagal-Arroyo might consider granting political amnesty to Trillanes and another military rebel leader, Sen. Gregorio Honasan, Ermita said this was highly possible:

"President Arroyo's policy since Day One of her administration has been to push for the peace process, and a peace process means making peace with those fighting government. And if the national leadership extends its hand of peace to the rebels fighting government with arms, I don't see why this same gesture cannot be done with political leaders who are opposed to the President.

"So there is a high probability that indeed, in the spirit of reconciliation and in the spirit of making things move forward, in the name of good governance, for the sake of our people, there is nothing that would prevent the President [from doing so]. And I think the President may just do that."

In the same breath, however, Ermita said this was not yet being discussed in Malacañang.

He also said election to public office would "not extinguish" the crimes of Trillanes and Honasan.

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RP-China papers . . .

From page A1

The project under the 20-year government-to-government deal covered by a Chinese loan at 3-percent annual interest was designed to meet the telecommunications needs of national government agencies and local government units down to the barangay level.

Assistant Secretary Lorenzo G. Formoso III of the Department of Transportation and Communications yesterday disclosed at a business forum the loss of the two "sovereign" documents that representatives of the Philippines and China had signed in the presence of President Arroyo.

Thieves broke into the hotel room of the Department of Trade protocol officer during the night after the NBN deal was forged and stole the original copies that were to be brought the following day to officials to be stamped with the Chinese seal.

"It appears that certain forces were at hand to derail the project," Formoso told the Economic Policy Reform and Advocacy and the Action for Economic Reforms at the Ateneo Professional Schools in Makati City.

Formoso said the National Bureau of Investigation had been called in to conduct an inquiry and declined to disclose further details. He said, however, the documents had been "reconstituted" and later reaffirmed by the two governments. The papers have not been made public.

Participants in the forum likened Formoso's revelation two months after the loss of the NBN documents to the disclosure by provincial election supervisor Lintang Bedol nearly a month after the May 14 balloting that vote tallies for Maguindanao supposedly in his safekeeping had been stolen.

Lack of transparency

Formoso was peppered with questions on the ostensible lack of transparency in the NBN deal in spite of his claim that the deal was "not a spur-of-the-moment thing."

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney, on several occasions, has urged the Arroyo administration to reconsider its bias in favor of China and review proposals for the project coming from other companies, including those from the United States.

"Considering the significance of the project to the President's economic agenda, I urge your good office to avoid undue haste and take the time to carefully review and consider the multiple expression of interest that have been submitted," Kenney said in a recent letter to Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri.

In another statement, Kenney pointed out that one US company offered to undertake the NBN project for half the Chinese cost.

Josefina Lichauco, former transportation undersecretary, called the NBN theft "unprecedented" and "scandalous."

"How can you leave China without bringing a copy home?" said Lichauco. "That's gross negligence. There is something wrong. Even if you don't have a dirty mind, you can really feel there's a lot of monkey business here because it is gathering flak from both sides."

Former Finance Secretary Ernest Leung said major contracts require a thorough examination by various government agencies, like the departments of finance and budget, because of the huge commitments involved.

"The question is have these people gone through it," Leung said. "You don't let the head of state go there and be embarrassed."

Ms Arroyo had made the trip to Hainan while her husband, Juan Miguel Arroyo, was recuperating from a near fatal heart condition that required major surgery.

P4B in annual savings

In his presentation, Formoso said the NBN project would save the government some P4 billion it spends annually for its communications needs and wangle rebates from mobile phone companies and electronic mail providers and servers.

But critics during the forum said that they did not see how savings could be generated from such a huge investment and doubted whether the government could run such a project that was best left to the private sector.

The NBN project has two main components—the setting up of a communications infrastructure and network application systems and services. Specifically, it calls for the establishment of 148 microwave relay stations, 300 "wimax" base stations that would allow "last mile distribution" of the facility.

It will cover 2,295 national offices and 23,549 barangay and municipal offices.

Currently, government communications basically consists of voice-only land lines, mobile phones, dial-up Internet access. E-mail and file transfers usually are done through Yahoo! or Google mail.

State of the art

The deal to be implemented by China's ZTE includes managed services, extensive training and technology transfer, said Formoso.

He described ZTE as a high tech company listed in the Hong Kong and Shenzhen stock exchanges and has a market capitalization of HK$5.942 billion (US$759.98 million) and RMB 50.96 billion (US$6.68 billion).

"The technologies proposed to be used in the NBN project are state of the art, mature but at the early stages of product life thereby avoiding early obsolescence," said Formoso.

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Recovery of Asian regional economies remains uneven

From page A1

on July 2, 1997—Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea—have charted sharply divergent paths over the last 10 years, reflecting their differing responses to the crisis and policies since then.

Humiliating bailout

South Korea, which received a humiliating $58-billion bailout arranged by the International Monetary Fund, quickly cleaned up its banking system and started reforming its heavily indebted family-owned conglomerates. The economy shrank and the jobless rate soared, but by 1999 it was robustly growing again.

The crisis, while painful, forced South Korea to make changes that paved the way for more stable long-term growth. Today, it is one of Asia's powerhouses, led by Samsung Electronics Co.—the world's biggest memory chip maker—and Hyundai Motor Co.

Indonesia, however, continues to struggle. The crisis helped bring about the downfall of former dictator Suharto and greater political freedom, but the economy remains beset by rampant corruption, a weak legal system and lackluster foreign investment. Economic growth has been ticking along at about 5.5 percent the last two years, but unemployment is rising.

Inconsistent reforms

Thailand hovers somewhere in between. Bangkok, where hundreds of skyscrapers froze in mid-construction when the crisis erupted, now has an elevated Skytrain, a subway, a brand-new airport and dozens of glitzy malls. Japanese investment has made Thailand a major auto and electronics exporting hub.

But a rise in the baht and political uncertainty caused by a tainted election in 2006 and military coup last September have been a drag on growth.

In the wake of the crisis, Thai authorities shut down dozens of insolvent financial firms, vastly improved banking supervision and updated archaic bankruptcy laws. However, it can still take years for creditors to pursue claims, and further reforms of laws governing bankruptcy and repossession of assets from recalcitrant debtors haven't gone beyond the drafting stage.

"Korea restructured its financial sector, but the problem in Thailand has been the inconsistency of reforms," says Sompop Manarangsan, a professor of economics at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University. "This is not good for the longer term."

Investors got a flashback to the 1997 crisis in December when the Thai central bank imposed capital controls in an attempt to weaken the currency, sending Thai stocks plummeting 15 percent in one day and rattling regional markets.

Authorities quickly exempted stocks and foreign direct investment from the rules, helping the market bounce back. Investors were also reassured to know that Thailand had $65 billion in foreign currency reserves, far more than in 1997.

SKYSCRAPERS froze in mid-construction during the crisis. The economy has picked up but still is mired in corruption. The upside to the Asian crisis was the downfal of the dictator Suharto. AP

Lingering challenges

Still, Thailand's bungled effort to impose capital controls underscores the lingering challenges that Asia's emerging economies face in handling international money flows in search of higher returns.

It was the dramatic outflow of funds from Thailand that forced the central bank on July 2, 1997, to finally cut the baht's peg to the dollar, causing the Thai currency to plummet, triggering the crisis.

Unlike today, many Thai companies at that time were burdened with huge dollar-denominated debts. When the local currency plunged, the value of those loans suddenly ballooned in baht terms, forcing many companies to go bankrupt.

That kindled speculative pressures that also forced currencies in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Korea to fall, driving more companies out of business, including one of South Korea's largest conglomerates, the Daewoo Group.

The turmoil rippled around the world, affecting markets as far away as Brazil and Russia.

In ensuing months, the IMF orchestrated emergency loans of $17 billion for Thailand, $50 billion for Indonesia and $58 billion for South Korea—and imposed austerity measures such as raising interest rates and cutting public spending that many believe exacerbated the crisis.

Since then, Asian nations have taken steps to protect themselves by bulking up their foreign currency reserves and set up regional agreements to supply emergency funds through bilateral currency swaps.

Rapid recovery

South Korea's effective use of the IMF funds to repair banks' balance sheets and moves to improve corporate transparency set the stage for a rapid recovery. After contracting 7 percent in 1998, the economy jumped 9.5 percent in 1999.

Many of the major conglomerates survived, but not without changes. The Samsung Group streamlined its business structure, shedding its automobile unit and reforming its financial structure by reducing debt. The Daewoo Group, however, collapsed spectacularly under mountains of debt.

South Korea also responded by opening its economy wider to foreign investors, bringing changes virtually unimaginable before the crisis.

For example, US private equity fund Newbridge Capital in late 1999 purchased a controlling stake in Korea First Bank, becoming the first foreign investor to acquire a South Korean financial institution.

Outlook for Indonesia

But the outlook for Indonesia—hardest hit by the crisis—is mixed.

The turmoil accompanying Suharto's ouster in 1998 made it difficult for authorities to tackle structural problems in the economy, including bad lending practices to corruption.

Today, billions of investment in utilities, factories, roads and ports is needed to achieve economic growth of more than 7 percent—the minimum level needed, experts say, to create enough jobs to put a dent in unemployment, now around 12.5 percent.

"The country is still dealing with the long-term fallout from the crisis," says Peter McCawley, an expert on the Indonesian economy at the Australian National University.

Progress on improving the investment climate has been patchy and many businesses prefer to locate factories elsewhere in Southeast Asia, where wages are lower, setting up is easier and corruption is less of a problem.

Exploration for Indonesia's vast copper, gold and zinc deposits remains dormant despite record metal prices. Companies say it is too risky investing millions when there is no certainty they will be able to mine them later. A mining law aimed at ensuring legal certainty for investors is still being debated in parliament. *AP*

Wyeth: Rust only outside milk cans but contents safe

From page A1

was not compromised and the integrity of the milk powder was maintained."

Asked to comment on the worries of many parents who had bought the affected products, BFAD Deputy Director Joshua Ramos said the parents should "report immediately to us if they feel something unusual."

He said those who have complaints or reports may call the BFAD at (02)842-5606.

Consumers may call Wyeth through 81-Wyeth (819-9384) for their concerns, Calimon said.

Moisture

Calimon, a doctor, said that on July 26, 2006, Wyeth learned that some 2.5 million of its canned and boxed products had been exposed to moisture on wooden pallets in its warehouse in Canlubang, Laguna, causing some lids to rust and cartons to moisten.

The BFAD ordered on Tuesday the recall of the specific Wyeth products manufactured from May 23 to July 26, 2006.

Calimon said these amounted to some 2 million cans and carton packages, of which close to 1.29 million had been released and carried in supermarkets and drugstores nationwide.

Asked how many the company took back when it learned of the problem, Calimon said: 279. She said only these units—which showed "specks of rust"—were classified as subject to recall from the market.

The recalled products have been destroyed and "corrective measures" have been initiated to prevent the problem from recurring at the plant, she said.

There was, however, no way of knowing whether any of the products from among the affected units were still in the market, or had been bought but were yet to be consumed.

'No health risk'

"Our investigations showed that the products covered under the product recall do not present a health risk … It was a purely packaging issue," Calimon said.

She said an audit report of the BFAD "did not indicate a specific health risk."

She added: "The current situation is a packaging issue confined to the exterior of the containers [of products manufactured within the time frame]. The high quality of the milk powder was maintained … As part of the recall, we plan to replace any product manufactured during the time frame to your total satisfaction."

To prove her point, Calimon demonstrated how rust from a milk can's outer rim could not have contaminated the product it held. She poured water over a closed can, dried it, then opened it to show that the liquid did not permeate even the aluminum seal, a secondary packaging layer under the lid.

Calimon said that even when moist, a boxed Wyeth product was also contamination-safe because the product was held in an airtight foil package.

"The foil is triple-layer, so it prevents any penetration. Even if you step on it, the integrity of the product is not affected. The foil is intact even if it is stepped on," Calimon said, stepping on a milk sachet to demonstrate the packaging strength.

While Wyeth has yet to announce the recall procedure, Calimon recommended that consumers check the manufacturing date of the products they had bought to determine whether these were produced within the time frame in question.

The manufacturing date is found at the bottom of milk cans or on top of boxed products.

Cease and desist

In its statement, Wyeth said it had not received any complaint of sickness or injury resulting from the affected products.

But some BFAD officials told the INQUIRER they had learned of several complaints that Wyeth considered invalid.

The recall order means that Wyeth should "cease and desist from selling" the affected products "until there is proof that the contents are safe," Ramos said.

He said Wyeth would have "to prove that the mold has not permeated [the containers and contaminated the contents]."

"We want to err on the side of caution," Ramos also said in explaining the recall order, which could cost Wyeth a huge loss in profit.

Referring to reports that Wyeth had used some of the affected products for animal feed, he said this could also pose risks, especially if the products would turn out to be contaminated.

The BFAD said in the recall order that the affected products presented "a risk of illness or injury" and that the bureau's action was "necessary or advisable to protect public health and welfare."

It said the health risk that the affected products could pose was classified as "reversible," meaning it could be treated.

4.3M cans

Ramos said that while Wyeth said in a letter to the BFAD in April that only 2.5 million cans were affected, the bureau's own accounting—based on the company's logbooks—showed there could be more than 4.3 million cans in question.

He said not all stocks of the four brands were affected, but only those belonging to several production batches manufactured between May 23 and July 26 last year.

Wyeth volunteered the information on the rusting cans in its letter to the BFAD. But earlier on, reports were circulating in the Internet and caught the attention of the Department of Health.

Wyeth said it discovered the problem during a routine quality check at its Canlubang warehouse on July 26, 2006.

The inspection showed that "some cans had minute rust specks on the outer rim," it said, adding:

"Products earlier shipped to the market were also inspected and a few units were retrieved for cosmetic reasons."

In the same letter, Wyeth told the BFAD it had destroyed 140,000 cans and had tested samples to prove the contents were safe.

As many as 172 production batches are affected, and Ramos said the sampling procedure as described in Wyeth's letter was "not representative" of the lots and "not statistically acceptable."

He said the BFAD would issue a public health advisory in leading newspapers to list the affected lots, and that Wyeth should issue its own advisory as part of its "corporate responsibility."

Vigilance

The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) yesterday welcomed the BFAD's recall order.

"It's a reassuring sign that the Department of Health is being vigilant in making sure that the products for infants are rigorously monitored," said Dale Rutstein, chief communications officer of Unicef Philippines.

"It's a healthy sign that the government is doing its job. Milk products should really be intensively and intrusively monitored for product quality and safety," he added. *With a report from Tina G. Santos*

Vatican issues unusual document for drivers

From page A1

make it before you even buckle up.

The unusual document from the Vatican's office for migrants and itinerant people warns that automobiles may be "an occasion of sin"—particularly when used to make a dangerous overtaking maneuver or when used by prostitutes and their clients.

The document also warns about the effects of road rage, saying driving may bring out "primitive" behavior in motorists, including "impoliteness, rude gestures, cursing, blasphemy, loss of sense of responsibility or deliberate infringement of the highway code."

Cardinal Renato Martino, who heads the office, told a news conference that the Vatican felt it necessary to address the pastoral needs of motorists because driving had become such a big part of contemporary life.

For some, the document was at least reason to poke fun at the Vatican.

"Overtaking is a sin? Well, then I'm a murderer, I'll turn myself in immediately," quipped movie director Dino Risi, whose classic film "The Easy Life"—"Il Sorpasso" or "The Overtaking"—ends with a car crash.

"I think the Vatican has lost its marbles," Risi was quoted by the Ansa news agency as saying.

There was no indication Pope Benedict XVI had approved of, or even read, the document. It was signed by Martino and his secretary—as is customary for lower-level documents that are routinely put out by the offices of the Vatican's vast bureaucracy.

Loose cannon

Martino, though, is known as something of a loose cannon at the Vatican, and occasionally his pronouncements have got him into trouble.

In 2003, he was rebuked by Vatican officials for having told a press conference the United States had treated Saddam Hussein "like a cow" after his capture. A senior Vatican official called in reporters several days later to stress that Martino was expressing his personal opinion and not the view of the Pope.

Vatican has only 1,000 cars

An estimated 1.2 million people are killed in road crashes each year and as many as 50 million are injured, according to World Health Organization statistics cited by Martino.

"That's a sad reality, and at the same time, a great challenge for society and the Church," he said.

Vatican City doesn't have many of the problems listed in the document. The world's smallest sovereign state has only about 1,000 cars, the speed limit is 30 kph.

One Vatican official said the last accident inside the city's walls was about 1-1/2 years ago, resulting in minor damage.

10 Commandments for drivers

VATICAN CITY—THE VATICAN took a break from strictly theological matters on Tuesday to issue its own rules of the road, a compendium of do's and don'ts on the moral aspects of driving and motoring.

Here are the 10 Commandments for drivers issued by the Vatican's office for migrants and itinerants:

1. You shall not kill.
2. The road shall be for you a means of communion between people and not of mortal harm.
3. Courtesy, uprightness and prudence will help you deal with unforeseen events.
4. Be charitable and help your neighbor in need, especially victims of accidents.
5. Cars shall not be for you an expression of power and domination, and an occasion of sin.
6. Charitably convince the young and not so young not to drive when they are not in a fitting condition to do so.
7. Support the families of accident victims.
8. Bring guilty motorists and their victims together, at the appropriate time, so that they can undergo the liberating experience of forgiveness.
9. On the road, protect the more vulnerable party.
10. Feel responsible toward others. *AP*

Even so, Martino explained that his office had been tasked with dealing with all "itinerant" people on the roads—from refugees to prostitutes, truck drivers to the homeless.

He also noted that the Bible was full of people on the move, including Mary and Joseph, the parents of Jesus.

Benefits of driving

The document, "Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of the Road," extols the benefits of driving—family outings, getting the sick to the hospital, allowing people to get to work and see other cultures.

But it laments a host of ills associated with automobiles: Drivers use their cars to show off; driving "provides an easy opportunity to dominate others" by speeding; and drivers can kill themselves and others if they don't get their cars regular tune-ups, if they drink, use drugs or fall asleep at the wheel.

It also points the finger at traffic problems particular to Italy, including the "minicars" that teens can drive without full drivers' licenses and "the reckless use of motorbikes and motorcycles."

It calls for drivers to obey speed limits and to exercise a host of Christian virtues: charity to fellow drivers, prudence on the roads, hope of arriving safely and justice in the event of crashes.

And it suggests prayer might come in handy—performing the Sign of the Cross before starting off and saying the Rosary along the way. The Rosary was particularly well-suited to recitation by all in the car since its "rhythm and gentle repetition does not distract the driver's attention."

Martino's initiative is sure to make headlines in Italy, where car culture is deeply entrenched—this is the home of Ferrari and Fiat—and where weekend highway deaths make the evening news on a regular basis.

Not sacrilegious

The Rev. Keith Pecklers, a Jesuit professor of liturgy at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, said Martino was clearly responding to an underreported social concern—an increase in traffic deaths in places, like Italy and Spain, because of speeding, as well as an increase in road rage, aggressive driving and DUI in places, like the United States.

"It may be surprising for people because we're accustomed to the church speaking out about sexual matters, capital punishment, immigration," Pecklers said.

"The point Cardinal Martino is making is that driving is itself a moral issue. How we drive impacts on the lives of ourselves and others."

Pecklers dismissed any suggestion that Martino's "10 Commandments" were at all sacrilegious, saying it was rather "creative pedagogy" that would certainly get people's attention. He stressed that they could never be considered binding in the way the official 10 Commandments are.

The Rev. Thomas Williams, a Rome-based theologian, concurred.

"It might be a little flippant but it's not sacrilegious," Williams said.

Controversial

Martino hasn't shied away from controversial topics, either. Just last week, he said Roman Catholics should stop donating money to Amnesty International because it had adopted a new policy calling for women to have access to abortion services in some circumstances.

Martino, who was the Vatican's envoy to the United Nations for 16 years, has also expressed support for genetically modified foods, saying they could help feed the world's hungry. He has also backed scientists who question the seriousness of climate change. *Reports from AP and Reuters*

US veterans equity bill to benefit 18,155 Pinoys

By Cynthia D. Balana

A TOTAL OF 18,155 Filipino World War II veterans are expected to benefit from the equity bills awaiting action in both houses of the United States Congress, according to Philippine Ambassador to the US Willy Gaa.

In a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Gaa said he has already transmitted this figure to key US legislative and executive officials who asked for the number of Filipino veterans that stand to benefit from the proposed law.

"By formally submitting a more accurate number, the US Congress as well as the US Veterans Administration will have a much clearer idea of the resources and other administrative requirements that are involved in the equity bill," Gaa said.

With an accurate count of veterans, "there will no longer be any speculations and estimates that tend to confuse the issue," he said.

He said Gen. Delfin Lorenzana, head of the Washington embassy's Veterans Affairs Office, went through the records and worked with the officials concerned in the Philippines to come up with a more accurate number.

He said the data were taken primarily from two sources—the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) which maintains the list of surviving WWII veterans, and the roster of Filipino WWII veterans in the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Regional Office in Manila.

This DVA roster is the same as the US Army Roster of Filipino WWII veterans stored in the US Army Archives in St. Louis, Missouri.

The US Army roster, which was compiled after the end of World War II, listed 260,143 Filipino WWII veterans, he said. Only 18,155 of this number have survived, he said.

"After the US Army left in 1948 with its list of Filipino WWII veterans, the Armed Forces of the Philippines continued to list late registrants," Gaa said.

Once the equity bill is passed, Gaa said the embassy would make a request to the US government for the inclusion of those who were not in the US Army list, subject to the legal screening procedure.

Doc laments death of local children's TV

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

CHILDREN WHO watch too much television tend to be less focused, more aggressive and have difficulty concentrating on their studies.

While there have been no local studies on the effect of television on children, Dr. Joseph Regalado, a pediatrician of the Cardinal Santos Medical Center, has observed these behaviors among his patients.

Regalado was one of the speakers during a forum yesterday on the effects of media on children organized by the Philippine Pediatric Society in Quezon City.

He said preschool children, aside from their exposure to video games, watch television at least two hours a day.

And what sort of programs do they watch?

According to media literacy advocate Feny delos Angeles-Bautista, local TV is flooded with imported children's shows, which are in a way, like full-length commercials because of the heavy merchandising of products.

This exposes Filipino children, who are still in their formative years, she said, to western culture and a foreign language.

It was something that Batibot, a children's TV show produced in Filipino, never did.

Unfortunately, Batibot ended its 18-year run in 2000. Its popularity spawned several educational programs, but they all folded up one after the other.

Bautista said that before Batibot went off air, 70 percent of children's shows on local TV were locally produced. Now only 10 percent of all children's shows are locally made.

The death of the local children's television three years ago has resulted in a nation of children without the sense of being Filipino, she said.

But switching off the TV is not the solution, Bautista said, because children could still learn a lot from the medium.

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AN INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following Electrical Fixtures Supply listed below for the project: UPGRADING OF PORT LIGHTING SYSTEM @ CIP COMPLEX, PORT OF CEBU.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is			Unit Price	Total
68	sets	High Pressure Sodium Floodlights 1000 watts, 277 Volts US or European Brand	24,000.00	1,632,000.00
17	sets	Control Panel Stainless Gauge 18 with ff: 1-60 AT, 3P, 480 Volts Circuit Breaker G.E. Brand, Industrial Type 1-Auto / Manual Selector Switch 15 A 1-Terminal Block 12 points 1-Legrand Fuse with Holder 6A, 500Volts Size : H – 24", L – 15", W – 5"	28,000.00	476,000.00
6	rolls	Stranded Wire 8.0mm2 THW	9,900.00	59,400.00
80	pcs	Stainless Bolt & Nut with washer, lock nut	40.00	3,200.00
		TOTAL		2,170,600.00

FUNDING SOURCE : Repair & Maintenance Fund – Physical Facilities

Bidding Documents may be purchased from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of One Thousand Pesos Only (PHP 1,000.00) starting 22 June to 29 June 2007.

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on 03 July 2007, 2 p.m. at the CPA Conference Room.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 9 a.m. on **16 July 2007** at the CPA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, CIP Complex, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security. **(Late bids shall not be accepted.)**

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA) reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, or to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

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The Cebu Port Authority (CPA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for supply of the following electrical fixtures listed below for the project: UPGRADING OF PORT LIGHTING SYSTEM AT CEBU BASEPORT @ MO-2 AND MO-3, PORT OF CEBU.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is:			Unit Price	Total
25	units	Amco Steel Tapered Lamp Post H – 25 ft, D – 8 inch, B – 12 inch	17,000.00	425,000.00
320	lengths	Atlanta PVC Pipe 40 mm dia	240.00	76,800.00
80	pcs	Atlanta PVC Elbow 90 x 40 mm	55.00	4,400.00
75	sets	Metal Halide Floodlights 250 watts 220 – 240V with Philips Bulb, Ballast & Ignitor	10,500.00	787,500.00
26	pcs.	Metal Pull Box 8" x 8" gauge .16	650.00	16,900.00
50	m	Liquidtite Conduit Pipe 3/4 dia	165.00	8,250.00
230	pcs.	Liquidtite St. Connector 3/4 dia	105.00	24,150.00
40	rolls	3 M Rubber Tapes	90.00	3,600.00
45	rolls	3 M Plastic Tapes 3117	25.00	1,125.00
140	pcs.	Solderless Connector Split Bolts Type for 38 mm2 Cable	210.00	9,400.00
1000	m	Stranded Wire 38 mm2 THW (Red)	350.00	350,000.00
1000	m	Stranded Wire 38 mm2 THW (Blue)	350.00	350,000.00
1000	m	Stranded Wire 38 mm2 THW (Black)	350.00	350,000.00
4	rolls	Stranded Wire 8.0 mm2 THW (Red)	9,900.00	39,600.00
4	rolls	Stranded Wire 8.0 mm2 THW (Blue)	9,900.00	39,600.00
300	pcs.	Plastic Cable Tie 12"	15.00	4,500.00
3	sets	Control Panel Stainless gauge 18 w/ the ff: 2 – 24 hrs. Timer (Fuji Elect.) 1 – 100 AT, 2P CB. Industrial Type (G.E.) 2 – 60 AT, 2P CB. Industrial Type (G.E.) 2 – Magnetic Contactor, 3 wire, 220 – 230 V Coil, 5.5K General Electric	28,000.00	84,000.00
Total				2,594,825.00

FUNDING SOURCE: Repair & Maintenance Fund – Physical Facilities

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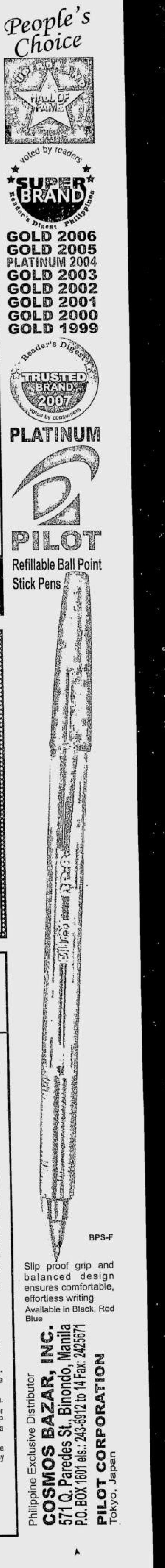
(PDI – June 21, 2007)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OPINION

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Plundered watch

EDITORIAL

CAROL ARAULLO, ERSTWHILE HEAD OF PLUNDER-Watch and now chair of the mass-based Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, may have thought she was being merely practical, when she told reporters during the oral summation phase of the Estrada plunder trial last week that she was no longer keen on the deposed president's conviction. In truth, she was being extremely cynical.

Her idea of justice, apparently, is inseparable from her politics. Which is unfortunate, because we shared the group's cause in its early days.

"We still believe that Erap should be held accountable for the things that he did," Araullo told reporters. "[But] the reason why you no longer see these groups calling for Mr. Estrada's conviction is because the sins of the Arroyo administration are much graver. You have political killings, graft and corruption, electoral fraud."

Well, yes, but does any of these expiate Joseph Estrada's original sin? Does President Macapagal-Arroyo's alleged stealing of the 2004 vote, to give one example, make Estrada's alleged crime, committed between 1998 and 2000, less criminal?

Apparently, the answer is yes, when the groups one is associated with, such as the Bayan Muna party-list group, strike an election-period arrangement with Estrada's camp, in a (largely successful) national campaign against administration candidates. That's the trouble when cases are politicized; the ends of justice are distorted by tactical alliances.

Last Friday, Araullo also questioned the very right of the Sandiganbayan to convict Estrada, revealing in the process a telltale conflation of the executive with the judiciary. "If President Estrada will be convicted, it should not be by this administration because it doesn't have the moral ascendancy."

Despite the use of the language of morality, the ascendancy assumption is 100-percent political. It is all about who gets the credit, and who shouldn't. Consider her statement again; even if the evidence is there to convict, conviction "should not be by this administration." That's the trouble when cases are politicized; the ends of justice, even when already tantalizingly near, are forgotten in the single-minded pursuit of political objectives.

The assumption that the administration will dictate the terms of the decision is also an old one, and used often by PlunderWatch in its many statements over the years. But consider the irony. In 2002, it sought to have Estrada, his wife Loi and their son Jinggoy cited for contempt of court, for issuing statements that, the group alleged, impugned the very integrity of the judicial system.

The Sandiganbayan dismissed the suit, and ever since PlunderWatch has blamed the government lawyers prosecuting Estrada for failing to support the petition. We were "marginalized," Araullo said in 2002. Ever since then, Araullo said, PlunderWatch has "lost the interest to mobilize" people to monitor the trial. And ever since then, the group has been issuing statements that, from one angle, can also be understood as undermining the justice system.

Araullo gave an example only last Friday: "The trial is only for political expediency. I don't believe it will be expedient for the Arroyo administration to have a conviction at this time."

So which, really, is which? No will to convict, or no right to convict? Even PlunderWatch is unsure.

Back when the group was pushing for Estrada's conviction, Araullo said, quite eloquently: "The message we are sending about Edsa is not justice. It is impunity. It is a message that says people who do wrong can get away with it. If we continue to let the likes of Estrada get away with what they've done, then Edsa would be useless."

That's the problem with politicized cases: watchdogs speak in absolutes (we won't let Estrada get away with what he's done), but end up acting in a manner that relativizes the ends of justice (we won't let Estrada get away, except, of course, if Arroyo is in our sights).

If PlunderWatch has more evidence against President Arroyo, then by all means let it file another plunder case against her. But now, more than ever, the Estrada plunder trial bears close watching. It's a shame that politics has kept Araullo and PlunderWatch away from it.

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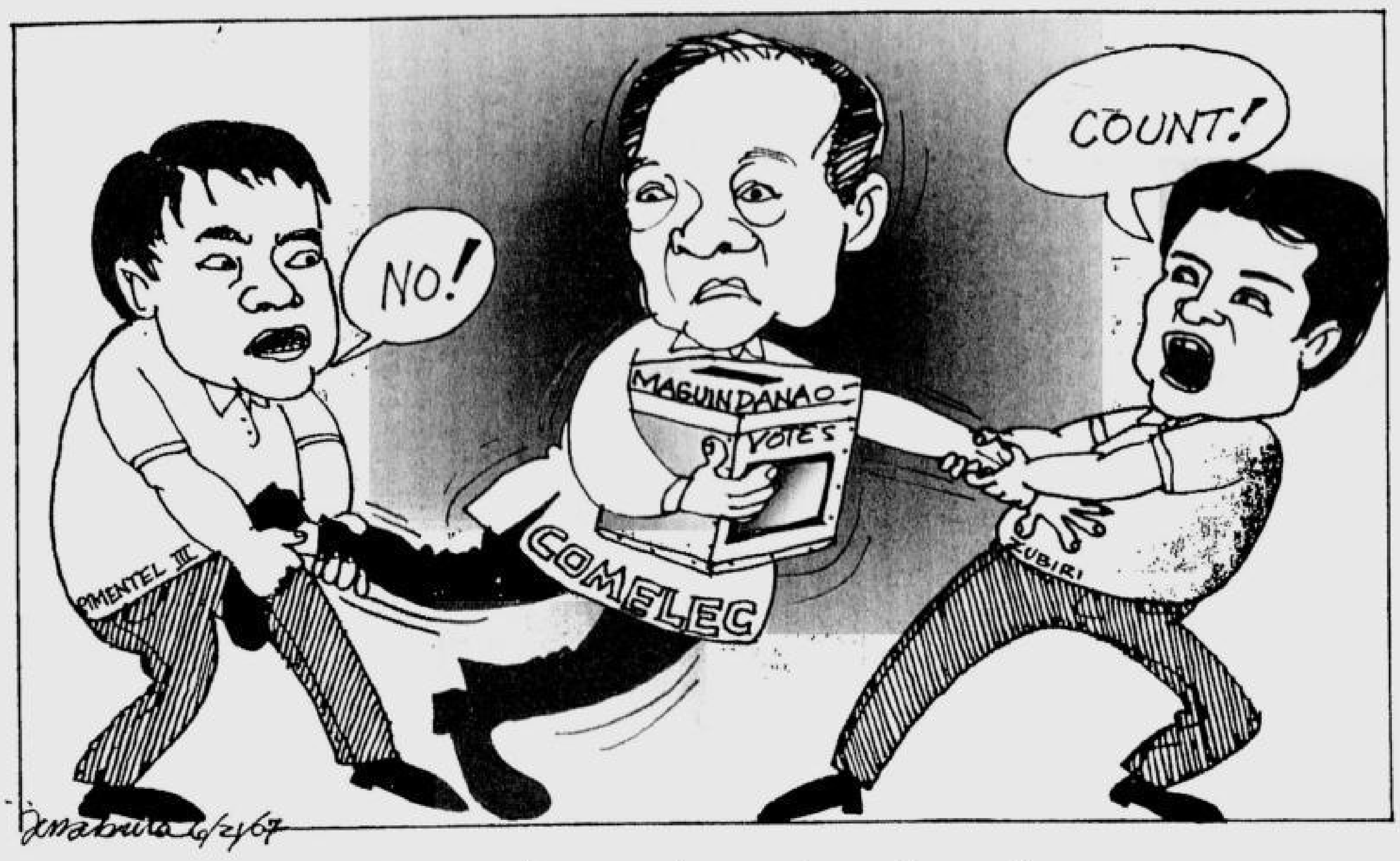

Extra-large begging bowls

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"THE 21ST CENTURY WILL BE THE CENTURY of cities," says the 2007 Worldwatch Institute study, "Our Urban Future." Decisive battles for humane lives will be fought in city alleys or crammed slums in a struggle "we are poorly equipped for."

That includes the Philippines. At last count, we have 123 cities, up from only 60 in 1990. City shingles were posted, this month, by Bogo in Cebu, San Juan in Metro Manila, Baybay in Leyte, Catbalogan in Samar and Lamitan in Basilan. Six are still in the queue, including Bayugan in Agusan del Sur. President Macapagal-Arroyo didn't sign the bills creating them. Most don't earn P100 million yearly, the rock-bottom minimum pegged by the Local Government Code to join the club. Instead of buttressing local revenues, they wangled exemptions from Congress in an election year. Come December, we'll have a glut of 129 cities.

Many can't even meet RA 9009's bare-bone criteria, notes Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Treñas who heads the League of Cities. "Can they deliver as cities?"

No, they can't. Nor will they tax idle land, collect business permits, etc. The share of local taxes has shriveled from 31 centavos out of every peso to only 20 centavos today.

But new cities panhandle. New cities can wheedle from the national government heftier Internal Revenue Allotments, chuckled San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito. "A living beggar is better than a dead king," the Ilokano proverb says.

IRAs for new mendicants would be clipped from revenues of poverty-stricken Muslim cities and fifth-class towns. A city shingle means a safety net for fading family dynasties. "You can't hold back development," Bogo Mayor Celestino Martinez III deadpanned.

Development is not a larger begging bowl. Rather, it's the process of empowering people to enlarge their choices, enabling them to rise to more humane standards of living, the UN Human Development Report asserts.

"Cities are not problems," says Jaime Lerner, who as mayor made the Brazilian city Curitiba a world symbol of startling innovation. "They are solutions"—but only when leaders craft policies that spur citizens "to bind present action to a clear perspective on the future... Cities then become a collective dream and a structure of change."

The old hoary excuse "lack of resources" (i.e., small IRAs) only guarantees paralysis, Lerner adds. City officials must have a vision of the ideal but do what is possible today. "Solutions for 20, 30 years ahead are pointless because by then the problems will have changed."

Begin on problems that will not need decades to show results. "The present belongs to us. And it is our responsibility to open paths."

The first small cities emerged in 4,000 BC, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. At no time since then have so many people poured into ill-prepared cities. Some time next year, a migrant will cross a city border—and an invisible line, says Christopher Flavin in "State of the World 2007." That crossing will be the first time in history in which more than half the people on earth—roughly 3.2 billion men, women and children—will live in cities.

The flood into cities is unlikely to ebb soon. Even in urban slums, life and economic breaks are fractionally better for many of the poor. Thus, Metro Manila today finds itself wedged among 20 mega-cities, i.e., those that have over 10 million people. In 1950, only Tokyo and New York were in the mega-city bracket.

Asian urban population mushroomed sevenfold in 55 years, says the Asian Development Bank. And in 23 years, 55 out of every 100 Filipinos will live in cities.

Already, this region accounts for 253 cities, with populations of between one and five million. Compare that to 59 in Africa. "Almost all of future population growth in Asia will be in towns and cities."

Cities can also die. Borobudor in Indonesia, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, Fatiphurshakri in India as well as Mayan cities between Mexico and Guatamela turned into ghostly ruins. Empty water cisterns, the collapse of food systems and misrule wrecked them. Today's cities can ignore that fatality list only at their peril.

There are silver linings. Rich and poor communities are bridging gaps left by mendicant, visionless governments, says "Our Urban Future." A remarkable array of breakthroughs include:

In Karachi, the city poor built themselves a sewerage system. Pune in India constructed sanitary toilet blocks to replace the "wrap-and-throw" waste disposal. Accra, Beijing, Vancouver and Argentina's Rosario boost food supplies by farms on rooftops and empty city lots.

Over 250 towns in Brazil now have citizens who participate in drawing up their budgets, following the innovation by Porto Alegre. (Naga City installed a similar system under Magsaysay Awardee Jesse Robredo.)

Singapore is a garden city. The Accord 21 building design in China reduces energy needs of standard buildings by 70 percent. Zabaleen in Cairo recycles 85 percent of the garbage collected. And Kampala in Uganda stanched water leakages from 51 percent to 29 percent.

"The cities of the future belong to the children of today," says Worldwatch Institute. New mind-sets can bridge that gap, not extra-large begging bowls.

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Be afraid

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I DON'T KNOW IF THE FIGURES WILL BEAR this out, but this has got to be the hottest year on earth.

As I write this, which is on Tuesday morning (I write in the mornings, which is fair warning to those who insist on calling me at that time: I will not answer the phone unless you text me to say you are dying, and probably won't do so anyway) a slow steady rain has been falling, which has dissipated the sweltering heat. I woke up to its drone, and never felt more grateful.

It's not like the thunderstorms we've had over the past couple of months, the ones that have the habit of descending where I live in late afternoon and sending crackling lightning and rumbling thunder in the neighborhood. (Heaven's instrumentations must be off; Malacañang is way over yonder.) Those thunderstorms produce only a bad imitation of New Year's Eve and horrendous traffic from flash floods, but they do nothing to dispel the heat. The temperatures rise swiftly afterward with vengeful fury, like gaseous fumes from scorched earth.

Over the last few months, I've racked up a minor fortune in electric bills. And I am not one to use air-conditioning wantonly. I am not a rich man and use air-conditioning only at bedtime, and only when the heat is unbearable, which it has been this year. It's not easy writing next day when you don't get some sleep, even if it's just the fitful sleep the deterioration of the body and worse the deterioration of the country allow. Your head feels vaporous, like you've just quit smoking.

I just use an electric fan when I am working. I swear that these past months, the swirling air from the fan, set at near-full blast, is an oasis in the Gobi Desert. You just stray away from its arc and you feel the heat slam at you like one of those overfed tacklers in American football. It's like one of those movies where people can't move away from an arc of light lest they be snatched away by the nocturnal creatures that prowl in the dark. Standing up from my desk to make coffee takes on the aspect of moving about while in the throes of gout. If the metaphors swirl around like debris in a whirlwind, blame it on a dazed brain.

I am not unused to sweltering heat. It's hotter in the countryside than in Metro Manila, particularly during summers—in more ways than one, not least literally. At least during the day, with the sun bearing down on you like an angry elementary school teacher. You go out of the shade, and you get an insight into how a pig feels roasting in slow fire. But at night, you feel epic relief from a world cooling down. You remember Mary Magdalene's words in "Jesus Christ, Superstar": "Sleep and I shall soothe you, calm you, and anoint you./ Myrrh for your hot forehead, oh/ Then you'll feel/ Everything's all right, yes, everything's fine./ And it's cool, and the ointment's sweet/ For the fire in your head and feet."

Someone explained this to me as a function of lack of smog. In Metro Manila it's cooler in the day because the smog screens off the sun's rays. At night it's hotter because the same smog prevents the heat from escaping. I'll take no smog anytime.

But that brings me to the point of this column, though I don't particularly mind just issuing an agonized cry from the oppression. It's that for the first time in many years, I'm truly scared. At least in the past, you knew that the heat wasn't going to last long, or, heaven forbid, forever. You knew it was just one of those cycles that happen as the planet turns around. You knew that at the end of it, another cycle would take place, when things would cool down, enough to make you feel like you were in Baguio while in Manila and get to bedazzle the natives with wardrobe that smells of mothballs. Today, that isn't true anymore. Suddenly, images of the various cycles of Dante's Hell, other than the seventh or eighth, which is absolute iciness, flash before your eyes.

This is the one year that's driven home the reality of global warming to me. It's not just the terrible heat that's unnerving me, it's the thought that it isn't going to go away. Not unless we add our voices to the desperate cry to save our planet, to save ourselves. This is one case where ignorance or apathy is doom. The melting of the polar ice caps gets past a certain point and all the king's horses and all the king's men won't put Humpty Dumpty back together again. At its most benign, think Blade Runner Los Angeles, and weep.

At this, being drowned by a tsunami of heat may be the least of our worries. That heat also carries with it ferocious storms, such as those that flattened southern Bicol late last year. Someone told me that houses like those made by Gawad Kalinga can withstand winds of 150 kph. But what if winds blow at 250 kph, which they did at the height of the superstorms last year? I saw parts of Albay this February, some months after the superstorms had had their way there. If someone had ordered Bicol turned into a howling wilderness, as Gen. Jake Smith bade his troops do to Samar during the American invasion, he could not be more satisfied.

I understand that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has made Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" required viewing for all personnel. I don't know why that should be confined to the DENR. I don't know that it shouldn't be required viewing in schools and offices, in buses and homes. This is not an environmental problem, this is a survival problem. The truth that it says may be inconvenient, but it is one no one who counts himself a member of the human species can afford not to hear. This is one case where the truth shall not only set you free, it will keep you alive.

In the meanwhile, I can only tell those who are feeling the heat and vituperating against it like I do: Be afraid.

Be very afraid.

Sensible suggestions from Sarmiento

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

COMELEC CHAIR BENJAMIN ABALOS AND Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer are in Maguindanao to study the documents gathered by the poll body's personnel, and presumably they will soon come to a decision to canvass the votes there or declare a failure of elections and then hold new elections. The opposition, notably Genuine Opposition candidate Aquilino Pimentel III, has been vigorously opposing both these moves and just wants the election results in Maguindanao scrapped altogether. GO's reasoning is that there has been a lot of fraud there, but as Team Unity and its lawyers argue, no one has come forward with evidence to substantiate the allegations.

* * *

The latest statement from some teachers there who allegedly were made to doctor some votes is that they don't consider Abalos "credible" so they don't want to be open with him. But until he is impeached or resigns, Abalos still heads the Comelec and they just have to entrust their "evidence" to him. Moreover, disregarding Maguindanao's votes would be undemocratic and unconstitutional as it would effectively mean disenfranchising the entire electorate there.

Pimentel is now exerting every effort to stay in the Magic 12 as he doubtless wants to boost his father's chances to become Senate president, but this cannot be at the cost of disenfranchising the Maguindanao voters. Besides, as TU's Migz Zubiri, Pimentel's rival for the final Senate seat, put it, what kind of victory would that be if it would exclude a province where he knows he lost? Disenfranchisement, stressed Zubiri, "is the most cruel form of electoral fraud."

* * *

A few weeks ago, Cecile Alvarez and I invited Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento to our Sunday evening dzRH program to talk about urgent electoral reforms. It turned out to be an instant "*paaralang bayan.*" Sarmiento, a graduate of the UP College of Law, has been in the Comelec for about a year, having gotten involved in one regular election and special elections in Lanao del Sur, Basilan, parts of Surigao and Sharif Kabunsuan.

Before talking about his ideas for reform, we asked him what happens when a province is placed "under Comelec control." All through the campaign and the election, we heard this phrase so often as violence and poll fraud escalated in such places as Nueva Ecija, Abra, San Carlos City and Bantayan Island. Sarmiento explained that placing a province under Comelec control means putting it under a Comelec commissioner who becomes the acting governor, something like an "instant general" who has the power to deputize any agency of the government, civil or military, as he sees fit. Sarmiento became acting governor of a number of places, including Lanao del Sur.

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With regard to electoral reforms, Sarmiento said that one of the suggestions he'd make is to de-synchronize elections. By holding national elections separate from the local, government's resources need not be over-stretched and citizens' groups assisting in the elections could truly focus on them. He also recommends limiting the Comelec's role solely to the management of the elections, which is complicated enough, and removing its judicial function and transferring this to a special court. He said the special court could adjudicate both pre-proclamation cases as well as election protests of local candidates since protests filed against congressional winners are heard and decided by the electoral tribunal of either the Senate or the House.

He's also batting for a more transparent process of choosing election commissioners. This is something few people would quarrel with and perhaps their selection could go through the same rigid process as that for members of the higher courts, with a body akin to the Judicial and Bar Council nominating the candidates.

* * *

Sarmiento also feels quite strongly that we should automate our election and counting, in accordance with the Poll Automation Law, RA 9369, signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last January 2007. He noted that automation was successfully employed in the 1995 ARMM elections. But while the House passed the bill calling for automation in the May 14, 2007 elections, the Senate debated it endlessly. Thus, when RA 9369 was finally passed last January, the Comelec felt there was no more time to make the necessary procurements and fulfill certain requisites, such as holding mock voting to test the system.

After the failure of elections in several places and numerous charges of cheating in various places, I think everyone, including the senators themselves, is fully convinced about the imperative to automate the 2010 presidential elections.

* * *

Sarmiento also proposes that some form of education about the elections and their importance to the national life ought to be included in the students' curriculum, so that the young people will develop civic consciousness and become stakeholders in the democratic process early. I think this is an excellent idea. But he wishes to expand this education to cover all those seeking various posts, so that they will understand the consequences of their positive or negative actions on the nation's life and growth.

I think this is an excellent idea. If applicants for driver's licenses or marriage are required to undergo seminars (the latter by the church), all the more should those seeking public office undergo education on public duties.

Sarmiento also suggested that the Constitution be amended so that the election of senators will be done by region, as the 1935 Constitution provided. The merit of this suggestion is self-evident, given the enormous amounts senatorial candidates spend and the rigors of the national campaign they have to go through.

'Trauma, interrupted': Naming the pain

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

WHAT CAN ART DO IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL suffering? Can artists interrupt the trauma or do they intensify the pain when they step into it and try to do something to ease it?

These are some of the questions posed by women artists in the art exhibit, "Trauma, interrupted," at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (June 14-July 29).

The art works in different media are the 18 artists' expression of their deep emotions (rage, shame, hope, peace) and resolve that have arisen from pain and trauma they've had to deal with—their very own or the collective pain and trauma of the women they have encountered.

The exhibit explores the links between trauma, art and healing. The art works, curator Dr. May Datuin said, challenge us to come to terms with a range of traumas, including those resulting from conflict situations, natural disasters, human rights violations, mental and physical afflictions.

The exhibit is dedicated to the memory of Tomasa Salinog or Lola Masing of Antique, whom Japanese soldiers turned into a "comfort woman" during World War II. She died last April 6 at the age of 78. The exhibit also honors the more than 50 Filipino comfort women (the Malaya Lolas) and many Asian women who came forward to speak about their ordeal and demand recognition and apologies from the Japanese government. (So far, no apologies. Most former comfort women have refused to accept funds from Japanese donors.)

It is also dedicated to women from all walks of life, women who have been wounded emotionally, spiritually, physically, and who seek to become whole again.

"Trauma, interrupted" is about naming the pain, looking it in the eye. But it is also about stepping back and looking at it from another vantage point. As psychologist Dr. Sylvia Estrada-Claudio told the exhibit crowd, "Art makes people step away from reality, from coherence and logic." Yes, to step out of the here and now and return to the source of pain and look at it with new eyes. But not to dwell there and make it a place of no return. There is a time to emerge from that hole and go back to reality.

There is no single formula for healing, Claudio said, and healing can take place in many levels. Many Malaya Lolas' healing took place in a communal level. These women's trauma had festered in their souls for more than 50 years, until someone like Rosa Henson broke the silence. With her revelation, the dam broke and the comfort women's collective voice rang out to jolt those who might have forgotten. They were no longer ashamed.

Here are some of the artists speaking about the spirit of their art.

Brenda Fajardo (Philippines), "She and I (Siya at Ako)" series, oil: "In the past it seemed easier to focus on the negative. (But here) I show the evolution of the victim to victor, strengthened by the feminine spirit-being we associate with the Blessed Virgin Mary, the *babaylan*, Isis, Sophia, etc. She is the moon with the strength of the sun, the yin and the yang in one. As spirit, she is transparent. The text (in gold) coming in from nowhere is inspired by meditative verses. I find the series a turning point for me, as a crossing of the threshold of space and time with the realization that SHE is there."

I felt unusually drawn to the third in the series. I kept gazing at the luminous SHE, the healing woman-spirit, and then decided to take a photo of the painting with my cell phone.

Terry Berkowitz (USA), "The Malaya Lola Project," photographs with soundtrack: "This project has brought me a deeper awareness of the suffering that has plagued women throughout history. It has allowed me to meet, interact and work with some very incredible women who survived the events of 1944."

Yong Soon Min (USA), "Wearing History," installation: Yong spray painted each of the 75 years on her clothing in order to have a personal daily connection to history. The business cards she gave out say: "I'm wearing, close to my heart, one year of the 75 years since Japan established the first comfort station in 1932. Over 200,000 women were coerced into sexual service for Japan's military. In demanding that the Japanese government accept unequivocal official responsibility for this war crime, I wear a year every day."

Sally Gutierrez (Spain), "Crying Room/Patchworked Dreams), video: "This is an intimate journey into the soundscape of the crying room, where the pain from the girls' damaged lives erupts in all its brutal, unprocessed intensity. Primal therapy, which is controversial in some countries, creates a sheltered space where abused girls can face their traumas and start their personal journey toward healing."

Lyra Garcellano (Philippines), "Burning Beds," oil on Polaroid photos: "The bed is always considered a refuge, a resting place, a source of rejuvenation, and even a provider of comfort. But how can there be refuge and comfort when brutality pervades our surroundings? Do we merely close our eyes and sleep through it?"

Garcellano's "Flowers for our Generation," silkscreen on paper, tries to achieve a wallpaper effect with images of guns shaped as flowers.

Ann Wizer and Naomi Wizer-Green, "Pain Drain," installation: The mother-daughter collaboration recreates Naomi's bathroom—her place of refuge—where she has been writing poems and communicating pain for herself and for her mother to read later. In this therapeutic space, viewers are invited to write their pain, fears and secrets.

Almost all the artists' works—many of them installations—invite to interaction and participation. Go, name your pain and begin to find healing.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Lost

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

IN THE PROVINCE OF PAPA-OOM-MAW-MAW, A demonstration of the New Math™ (and other adventures in learning).

"This meeting will come to order. Commissioner Dagdag?"

"Present!"

"Commissioner Bawas?"

"Ready for duty, Chairman Ayos!"

"Commissioner Gapang?"

"Here, ready and willing!"

"Very good. So, we are all present and accounting for."

"Excuse me, Chairman Ayos…"

"What is it, Commissioner Dagdag?"

"You mean, 'present and accounted for,' because 'accounting for' might be, you know, heh-heh…"

"Ah. Hee hee. True. Very well. Gentlemen, we are here to conduct a special investigation to find out what happened to the numbers in the province of Papa-oom-maw-maw. We cannot declaim, I mean retain, I mean sustain, I mean—"

"Sir, victory for Zooberry!"

"Yes. Which requires numbers. Commissioners Dagdag and Bawas, can you tell us why we have no numbers?"

"Actually, sir, numbers were produced, it's just that witnesses came forward to say the numbers were invented."

"Invented? How?"

"Secret!"

"Oh, of course. But so, what happened with the witnesses?"

"Sir, do you see any witnesses? Anywhere?"

"I guess not. But—oh! Hee hee. So what's the problem?"

"Chairman, you said we should declare a failure of counting here in Papa-oom-maw-maw, but then it turned out the numbers were OK."

"They are?"

"Except, we have a problem. You see, the numbers—they're sort of missing."

"Missing? But I thought it was the witnesses who—"

"Never mind them, sir, it's the numbers. They're… lost!"

"Where were they last seen?"

"In Mr. Betel's office. But Betel has kind of gone … nuts."

"Betel? Nuts? Explain!"

"Well, perhaps, Mr. Chairman, we should ask him?"

"Very well. Call in Mr. Betel."

"Hi *po*."

"Mr. Betel, do you swear that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?"

"Maybe *po*."

"Good enough. So, tell us, where are the numbers?"

"Lost *po*."

"Lost? How?"

"Actually, stolen *po*."

"Stolen? How?"

"Well, really, eaten *po*."

"Eaten?"

"Kasi *po*, my dog ate the numbers and then someone stole my dog. It's true *po*."

"Oh. How terrible. And where's your dog?"

"Missing *na nga, po*."

"Ah. And, uh, what is that beside you?"

"Oh? That? My cat, *po*."

"Why is it barking?"

"I don't know *po*."

"Ah. Curious. Thank you for your testimony."

"Bye, *po*."

"Well gentlemen, it seems the numbers (or the dog, or both) were eaten! What do we do?"

"Chairman Ayos, I move that we find substitute numbers."

"Commissioner Bawas moves that we look for new numbers. Produce the new numbers!"

"Sir, we have to find the new numbers first."

"Oh. Is that difficult?"

"Not really, Sir. Let us apply the Advanced New Math™."

"I like that! Tell me how we can do that, Commissioner Gapang."

"Well, sir, we have two sets of relevant numbers. The Zooberry numbers, and the Pimple numbers. Applying the Theory of Glorious Relativity, we know that where A=Zooberry and B=Pimple and C=Population, then A=C-B squared, where A is always 12 times C."

"Huh?"

"That's why it's advanced New Math™, Chairman. Leave it to Commissioners Dagdag and Bawas to compute."

"No, no, I'm a pro. Hmmm. We know there are 3,000,000 people in Papa-oom-maw-maw, then we already know Zooberry, I mean, A, equals 36,000,000 numbers!"

"Well, no sir, that's too extreme. A equals 3,000,000 minus 5 squared, or 25 (that's the number for Pimple, or B), where A, or Zooberry, always equals 12 times 3,000,000 or C. So, 36 million."

"That's what I said!"

"But, sir, you see, it's the process that matters."

"Ah! Of course! We must always uphold the numbers process!"

"Exactly, Chairman Ayos. So now that we know the results, we can work backwards and rediscover the numbers!"

"And that is why we're here, yes?"

"Yes, sir. Oh, by the way, sir, what's that under your chair?"

"Where? Here? Oh! Look! Numbers!"

(Chorus) "Wow! Plenty of numbers!"

"My God, amazing! Let me see… 1… 2… 7… 11… 36… 954… 10 million… 20 million… 29 million and a half… why, 36 million numbers! Imagine that! All for… Zooberry!"

(Chorus) "A miracle!"

"No! It's the triumph of New Math™!"

(Chorus) "Amen!"

Godmother

NO WORD CAN DESCRIBE MY FEELING WHEN A FRIEND told me about the christening of another friend's son. Perhaps I was happy since baptisms are a happy occasion. Maybe, I was thankful because my friend chose to give life to her child. Or I could have been simply excited because I would be a godmother for the second time.

YOUNG BLOOD

Georgene Rhena Papal Quilaton

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

The day of the baptism was set for Easter Sunday. But until I entered the cathedral, I never thought I would be seeing a reality which happened to her and which can also happen to me.

As the seminar proceeded, we ignored the person talking. I held the baby in my arms carefully, afraid that I might break his little bones or drop him. But I love kids, and I kept tickling him as I talked to his mother, a tall, slender and pretty 18-year-old. She had reverted to her sculptured figure after giving birth to her son.

At the minister's call, she carried her baby to the altar for the baptismal rites. On that line of mothers, my friend stood out. She was wearing a pair of stilettos and tight-fitting jeans topped with a knitted, body-hugging blouse. She looked like a beauty queen.

I snapped out of my reverie when the minister repeatedly stressed the word "obligation." He was talking about the parents' obligation to their children and the godparents' obligation to help the parents raise their kids well. I gave a mocking look to the friend who had sent the message and was now my *kumpare*.

"Godparents have an obligation, too. Did you hear that?" I whispered to him.

"Oh, yes!" he said. "The obligation to give gifts on birthdays and Christmas!"

I laughed discreetly. But what can you expect from 18-year-old godparents?

But to carry the question further, what can you expect from teenage mothers? If you ask their parents, they surely did not act responsibly as teenage daughters.

I turned pensive and began thinking: My friend is not ready to take on her "obligation" or for the responsibility of rearing a child—of motherhood. She is no different from other teenage mothers who know next to nothing about motherhood.

"Motherhood comes with maturity." That was what our guidance counselor told me in my interview I did for an article about motherly love for my journalism course. Now, I could understand what she was trying to say.

For the next few minutes, I continuously observed my friend's actions and knew that I was right. I was not prejudging her. I was just seeing a reality unfold before my eyes and I could not help but reflect on it and fear that it might happen to me, too.

My point is not to question a young mother's love for her child since motherly love is innate. The issue is, the readiness of someone so young to translate that love into action and let the child awaken to it and grow with it.

A teenage mother may have given life to her child but motherhood certainly does not stop upon giving birth. Instead, another stage starts when the baby comes out of her womb.

Young as I am, I view motherhood as a never-ending task as much as a gift. It does not end until death parts the mother from her child or children. It is a cliché all right, but once a mother, always a mother.

As the baptismal rites continued, I heard the baby cry. He was hungry. His father broke away from the crowd of parents and godparents gathered in front of the altar to get milk. Soon he was back, and the baby started sucking quietly from the plastic feeding bottle.

"Is that it?" I asked myself. "Is motherhood all about feeding the young?"

No. Humans do not just need social workers but loving mothers who will keep their children safe and warm. A mother's hands are not for feeding but also for leading the kids to be good and do good. Motherhood not only aims to grow children but to mold good persons.

But teenage mothers are little more than helpless girls who have been thrown into a pit. They do not have the slightest idea that it is a pit and that they have to climb out of it with their babies in their arms. They think it is enough to give birth and they hardly think of their obligation to give their children a good life.

But how can they give their children a good life when their own lives are a shambles? How can they dream for their babies when their own dreams were shattered by unexpected pregnancies?

As I thought about it, I became very disturbed. What if I found myself in that pit? I would not know it, too, just like all the others who are already there.

At our age, motherhood is not our immediate concern. We love parties, clothes, shoes, bags, dates and maybe good grades. We have needs and caprices like lotions, moisturizers, conditioners and visits to the parlor. We do not think of nursing children or buying diapers. We are dependent on our parents for everything since we do not have any sources of income yet. I myself am dependent on my mother who works to provide me all these. I cannot imagine how I would provide these things to my baby if I have one at my age.

Motherhood is not our thing yet although we all look forward to being mothers. But for us the more attractive dreams right now is earning a college degree, landing a good job, owning a house and perhaps a car. Motherhood is not our thing, unless we become responsible enough for ourselves and for our own future.

When the ceremony was done, I blew the candles which we as godparents lit to symbolize our obligation to provide light for the child as he grows up. At the party that followed, I just picked on the food as I continued to worry about what the future held for my friend. Then I finally figured out how I felt: I do not pity her, I empathized with her. And this empathy was accompanied by fear—fear for myself.

While everybody laughed, ate, chatted and sipped their drink, these thoughts whirled around my 18-year-old mind. I could not help it. This reality was biting: long after the merry-making, the fact that my friend was a teenage mother would remain. She was in the pit and I wished she would be able to climb out of it with her baby.

The thought that the same thing could happen to me kept coming back as I rode a tricycle on my way home. My dreams could shatter. The diploma could fly away. Worse, my child would grow up in a family that's not complete, just like me.

I love kids and I wish someday I will be gifted with children of my own. Someday, when I get past the parties, clothes and shoes and when I am ready for motherhood and everything that comes with it. But not now when my mother still has to buy my food, milk and vitamins.

Georgene Rhena Papal Quilaton, 18, is a third year BA Broadcast Communication student at the University of the Philippines in the Visayas in Miagao, Iloilo.

Pathetic, hypocritical piety

I WAS WATCHING A TV NEWS program which featured an interview with senatorial hopeful Migz Zubiri. In that interview, he claimed that if the votes in Maguindanao were to be counted, he would be able to grab the 12th slot from Koko Pimentel.

It was all good watching and listening, until he began invoking, praising and thanking God (and Mama Mary, too!) for being assured of winning the 12th slot.

When will politicians (Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo included) stop using God's name in any and all of their media pronouncements? The act is so pathetic, one can just puke.

Funny, but when a bishop or any man of the cloth writes or speaks against government's wrongdoings, those in public service shout foul and invoke the principle of the separation of Church and State. They insist that bishops and priests should lay off politics.

What pathetic hypocrisy.

—JEREMIAS DECENA,
jeremiasdecena@yahoo.com

Another big blow to electricity consumers

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS ITEM titled "Amendments to Epira rules OKd." (INQUIRER, 6/7/07) According to that report, the proposed amendments to Rule 3, Sec. 4(e) of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) were approved during the meeting of the Joint Congressional Power Commission (JCPC) last June 7, 2007. The amendments, initiated by the Department of Energy and the Energy Regulatory Commission, allow the distribution utilities, such as Meralco, to recover automatically the generation- and foreign exchange-related cost.

The approval came as a heavy blow to power consumers. Instead of protecting the consumers, the DOE and ERC are behaving like the utilities' lobby group.

The same news story also reported that the amendments were meant to remove the "regulatory lag" which resulted in the swelling of Meralco's "cost under-recoveries" to as much as P12.2 billion in April.

The ball is now in the hands of President Macapagal-Arroyo. It is within her power to issue or not an executive order that will restore the automatic recovery provision. We pray that she reject the JCPC approval.

It should be noted that in 2004, this generation rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM) application of Meralco was the main subject of a joint petition that the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc. (Nasecore)—together with the Federation of Village Association of Muntinlupa, and the Federation of Las Piñas Homeowners Association—filed before the Supreme Court.

Consider this: Out of Meralco's eight GRAM applications, seven were granted provisional approval (PA); the seventh, ERC Case No. 2007-078, was set for initial hearing on June 15, 2007, while the eighth is still to be scheduled by the ERC for public hearing.

With this, Meralco is left with only one application waiting for PA. So, why raise the issue of regulatory lag when the ERC in fact has issued PAs for Meralco's GRAM applications even before initial hearings?

What the ERC obviously failed to disclose to the DOE and JCPC is that Meralco made unauthorized collections amounting to about P2.5 billion in the four months' over-recoveries—from November to December 2006 and from January to February 2007. Nasecore has filed a motion for immediate refund with the ERC, which has directed Meralco to submit a refund scheme.

We strongly believe that the amendment is a violation of the consumers' right to due process. And the ones most affected by any rate adjustment are the residential consumers who—unlike industrial and commercial customers—cannot pass on these costs.

Had the DOE and most especially the JCPC bothered to look into the fact sheets of the ERC regarding Meralco's GRAM applications, they would have ruled in favor of the consumers.

—PETE L. ILAGAN,
president, National Association
of Electricity Consumers
for Reforms,
10 Bayside Court Compound,
680 Quirino Avenue,
Tambo, Parañaque City

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LETTERS

Sad markers for a celebration

IT WAS SAD AND DISHEARTENING to watch the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the House of Representatives at a time when that body couldn't even act on a list of bills urgently in need of legislative action; when it couldn't live up to its mandate as a separate, distinct and autonomous branch of government.

In its 100 years of existence, it could not spare five minutes or less to ratify the compensation bill for the benefit of martial law victims.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has announced that the ratification of this bill would happen in the 14th Congress. But isn't the House supposed to be independent from Malacañang? Ermita's double-talk falls flat when one considers that the compensation bill was up for mere ratification by the House in the 13th Congress. At the 14th Congress, the bill will have to be filed and have to go through the whole process again. This is the height of deception.

The House must assert its own prerogative as a separate branch of government and do what is right by passing the compensation bill, along with the UP Charter bill and the cheaper medicines bill. None should be left behind. They are all of legitimate public interest.

—JOHN VINCENT S. CRUZ,
media officer,
Office of Rep. Loretta Ann
P. Rosales, Akbayan Sa Kongreso,
South Wing, Rm. 511
House of Representatives,
Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City

BI physician appealed suspension

ON BEHALF OF DR. ELSIE Lobrin, Bureau of Immigration, Medical Section chief, we would like to clarify the news item headlined "3 BI employees suspended for Viet-Am's escape" (INQUIRER, 6/19/07), which stated, among others, the following: "Kalaw, Lobrin and Agana did not appeal their suspensions." This is not accurate.

As early as Jan. 23, 2007, Dr. Lobrin had filed an urgent motion to lift preventive suspension on the following grounds:

1. Dr. Lobrin was not invited or allowed to participate during the fact-finding sessions made by the Department of Justice on the matter.

2. Dr. Lobrin did not issue a medical pass in May 2005, which resulted in the alleged escape of Vo Van Duc.

3. The prima facie findings and the charges against Dr. Lobrin are not supported by evidence.

Sad to say that up to now, the DOJ has not acted on the urgent motion to lift preventive suspension and has failed to conduct a formal hearing on or inquiry into the matter despite Dr. Lobrin's request, which she made in her verified answer filed last Jan. 29, 2007.

Hoping this will clarify the matter.

—IBARO B. RELAMIDA JR.,
Law Office of A.M. Sison Jr. &
Partners, Suite 2002-A Security
Bank Centre, 6776 Ayala Avenue,
Makati City

De Quiros' 'swivel-chair' reaction

JOKER ARROYO SAID THAT "Jonas (Burgos) is not the swivel chair reformer—they who advocate and write in authoritarian tones about social reform and who are tolerated by the uniformed services as the example of the government's respect for civil liberties, of freedom of expression. [They] are not abducted, not even arrested, or bothered." (INQUIRER, 5/28/07)

Conrado de Quiros promptly reacted: Joker Arroyo finally speaking about Jonas Burgos "does not seem bent on living up to his past, he seems bent on living up to his name." (INQUIRER 5/30/07)

Where has De Quiros been all this time? More than any candidate did, opposition candidates included, Arroyo condemned and denounced the abduction of Jonas in the strongest terms—over the radio, on TV and in print media—during the campaign whenever he was interviewed in the provinces and cities.

But De Quiros, it seems, reads and imbibes only his own columns and does not listen to the radio. He fits exactly the prototype swivel-chair reformer whose vision and outlook does not go beyond his doorsteps. He reacted, not because of Arroyo's thesis, but because the description of the swivel chair reformer fits him perfectly.

Despite his anti-everything writings for the past 20 years, he has not been arrested, not even bothered by the military. His writings are tolerated, even bannered as the example of the government's respect for civil liberties and for the freedom of expression.

That is why the Joker piece pierced De Quiros. The shoe fits. As for his distaste for Arroyo's analysis, that is better left to the reader to judge. What is amusing is his fast swivel-chair reaction.

—EDGAR ALFREDO DIAZ JR.,
29 Meralco Ave., B242,
Alexandria Condominiums,
Pasig City

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Cockfighting not in the Filipino blood

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE LETTER OF Dr. Christian Cangco of Calaca, Batanes. (INQUIRER, 6/18/07) He said that cockfighting runs in the Filipino blood, as if it could never be excised from our lifestyle, and as if we could never live without it.

Let me just state certain facts about cockfighting in the Philippines: there are more cockpit arenas than churches in the country. What a shame!

Also, we have heard of reports about accidents occurring during cockfights. So how can we say that cockfighting is a "fun hobby"?

Cockfighting runs in our blood? No, this isn't true. Cockfighting was brought into the country by our Spanish colonizers. This is a fact that we were supposed to have learned in our primary grades. And as far as I know, our forefathers did not know how to gamble until our colonizers came and influenced our way of life.

Though cockfighting is legal, it is not moral: That is the irony in our system. Isn't it that when you make a law, you must make sure that it is acceptable to the general populace?

It seems that Cangco is not defending us, his countrymen. He sounds like he is disparaging our nation.

Rebecca Walsh's letter was a wake-up call for a lot of Filipinos who are fond of betting in cockfights.

—MA. DANA EVANGELISTA,
105 A.V. Cruz St.,
Kalawaan, Pasig City

Only science can solve poverty

COMMENTARY

Flor Lacanilao

Addressing the symptoms rather than the causes is our common approach to solving problems.

Let's take the problems of poverty and overpopulation discussed in a letter to the editor. (INQUIRER, 6/18/07) They are symptoms of underdevelopment, forming a vicious cycle, making economic growth more difficult. Dealing with symptoms is just like administering medicine to ease the pain instead of curing the disease. We must address the cause to achieve the objective.

The basic cause of our underdevelopment is poor science and technology (S&T). While controlling population growth may facilitate economic progress, this cannot be achieved without S&T. We should learn from densely populated countries that have left us behind and the sparsely populated African countries, which have remained poor.

When Singapore was developing its industrial base in the '60s and '70s, its population density was higher than that of the Philippines today; but its government relied much on the country's scientists and focused on advancing science and technology. By 1995, the number of its scientific publications (the established measure of S&T performance) was six times more than that of the Philippines, even though we were 20 times bigger than Singapore.

In India, which has 1 billion people and a high population density (368 persons per sq km against our 300), economic growth is in rapid progress. "Signs are accumulating that India is on course to becoming one of the world's scientific and technological leaders . . . more and more young scientists now are opting to stay or at least return to India. Not only are living conditions improving, but opportunities for exciting work are exploding owing to a growing roster of research and development centers that multinational companies have been establishing there in recent years."

African countries, however, have remained poor despite low population densities. For example, Zimbabwe, Congo, Mozambique, Sudan, Zambia and Angola have only 10 to 32 persons per sq km. Hence, it was said, "Whereas science alone cannot save Africa, Africa without science cannot be saved."

While our government, by its pronouncements, has long recognized the importance of S&T to economic growth, it has failed to institute programs to improve science.

Poor science has been our major obstacle to economic growth. And it has led to the public's confusion and difficulty in distinguishing between the causes and symptoms of national problems. Mainly to blame is the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) which is mandated "to advise the President and the Cabinet on matters related to science and technology."

Corruption in government and common crimes are also symptoms of underdevelopment. So are poor education and environment degradation. Like poverty and overpopulation, they are problems that largely disappear as a nation achieves real growth through S&T. The few crooks that remain in developed countries are for sociologists to explain. They are not development-related.

"Development goals that do not recognize the importance of science and technology in economic transformation are likely to fail, especially those aimed at reducing poverty and raising income levels." (Harvard Report: Meeting the needs of developing countries, 2001)

Flor Lacanilao is a retired professor of marine science at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City. His series of published articles on public understanding of science are now posted at www.philippinestoday.net (under SciTech Update). The articles discuss how science should be done and how the Filipino scientific community has failed in its social responsibility.

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Young stamp collector wins more awards

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

A HIGH SCHOOL student from Lucena City continues to reap honors abroad because of her stamp collections.

On June 17, Alyssah Xeniah C. Alcala's stamp collections, titled "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II," was proclaimed the "2007 AAPE Youth Champion of Champions" in the National Topical Stamp Show at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving, Texas, USA.

The exhibit was sponsored by the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors (AAPE).

It is also known among stamp collectors as the "World Series of Philately Exhibition," Alyssah's father, Alberto, said.

Winners of the AAPE Youth Grand Awards from nationally accredited shows in the US and Canada vied for the much-coveted "Youth Champion of Champions" and for many other donated awards.

The 14-year-old Alyssah represented Royal 2006 Royale, an annual national stamp exhibition in Canada where she won the "Youth Grand Award" and a "Vermeil Medal" last year.

"This is a great victory for our daughter because she's an outsider. Alyssah is the first Asian or perhaps the first non-American or Canadian AAPE champion," said Alberto, who's also a serious stamp collector and the president of the Quezon Philatelic Club.

ALYSSAH Alcala's stamp collection portraying Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom won a Vermeil Medal in Rochester National Philatelic Exhibition in Rochester, New York. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Alyssah, who is a sophomore at the Sacred Heart College in Lucena, bested several bemedaled stamp exhibitors for 2001, 2003 and 2005.

Alberto said Alyssah was equally surprised with the latest honor. "She was in school when we received the news through e-mail," he said.

Last month, the same collection of different stamps that portray Queen Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor) of the United Kingdom, won a Vermeil Medal in Rochester National Philatelic Exhibition (Ropex 2007) held at the ESL Sports Centre in Monroe Community College, Rochester, New York.

Vermeil is the medal level between gold and silver.

"Being part of Ropex 2007 is also very prestigious because this is being held under the auspices of one of the oldest philatelic organizations in the USA. Their first exhibition started as early as 1913. Apparently, no youth exhibitor from the Philippines has ever competed except my daughter," Alberto said.

Alyssah's Queen Elizabeth II stamp collection won the gold and special prizes at the state level (youth category) at the Canberra Stamp Show 2006 in Australia last year.

Alyssah was the first Filipino to join the 20-year-old Canberra Stamp Show and the youngest exhibitor ever to join the prominent event, according to her father.

She has been collecting stamps since she was in Grade 2.

In August 2006, the same stamp collection on Queen Elizabeth II garnered a "large silver medal" award in the Adelaide Stampex in Australia. The exhibition assembled 166 stamp collectors from different parts of the globe.

The following month, Alyssah's multi-awarded collection also received recognition in Royal 2006 Royale National Stamp Exhibition in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, which gave her the merit to qualify in the AAPE contest.

In October, Alyssah's collection was awarded a "silver bronze medal" and a diploma at Kiwipex 2006 held at the Christchurch Convention Centre in New Zealand.

Alyssah wrote a letter to Queen Elizabeth II, informing her of her collection of different stamps that portray the royal personality. The queen responded with a "thank you" letter and photos of herself inside the Windsor Palace.

"Although I'm very happy with the recognition that I've been receiving for my stamp collection, I'm still sad that I was not able to join the other more prestigious competitions abroad due to lack of sponsors to fund my overseas exhibition," Alyssah had lamented in an earlier interview.

More stamp collectors from abroad have been supporting her exhibits in foreign shores.

"We really need sponsors to support her exhibits abroad," Alberto said.

Whenever there are prestigious stamp exhibits abroad, Alberto said he coordinated with the organizers through e-mail. All the payments for mailing and entry fees are shouldered by the sponsors.

"Most of the time, youth exhibitors are free from entry fees," Alberto said.

The "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II" stamps collection returned to the country once in November 2006, he said. Alyssah took the opportunity to expand the collections from two to three frames.

Alberto said the preparation of stamp collections for an overseas exhibit entailed expenses, including those for acquiring more philatelic items, display materials and fees for mailing, entry and registration, documentation.

Expats pool resources to help town mates

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

FREDERICK RILI, 26, A native of Makati City, will be finishing his masteral studies in International Relations this year, thanks to a scholarship grant from the Metro Infanta Foundation (MIF).

The 11-year-old MIF, a Filipino-run nonprofit organization based in Colorado, USA, unites a group of Filipino expatriates living in different parts of the globe not only to provide education to students but also to initiate and fund worthy causes back home, especially in northern Quezon.

Mila Glodava, MIF president, said the foundation was an offshoot of a two-page newsletter which she distributed to her former high school classmates in Infanta in 1995.

The newsletter was such a hit that one of her sisters and her friends suggested sending a similar publication to "Infantahins" in the USA to expand the mailing list.

"Soon, more names were coming my way and it was clear that a nonprofit organization was in order. By the time we turned to the website, we had more than 400 on our 'Where are they now?' list," she said.

The foundation was formed in 1996 when Glodava was a fellow of the Asian/Pacific Women's Leadership Institute. The fellows were required to create an impact project that would benefit at least 25 people.

"I was determined in seeing to it that my impact project would reach out to my hometown. I wanted to create a foundation that would pool the resources of Infantahins so we could address the needs of our hometown and beyond," Glodava said in an e-mail interview.

Since its formation, the MIF has been providing scholarships to high school students.

In 2002, during the launch of the book "Labong ng Kawayan: Walking through the Pathways and Streets of Infanta," a compilation of stories about their native town which the MIF published, the foundation decided to establish several scholarships for college students.

A number of high school and college students in schools belonging to the Catholic Association of Schools of the Prelature of Infanta (Caspi) also started to avail themselves of educational subsidy.

"Before 2002, our scholarship efforts were quite sporadic. That's why we decided to retain the services of the Socio Pastoral Institute (SPI) to monitor our grants' recipients, especially our scholarship program," Glodava said.

The SPI, a Church-based nongovernment organization in Manila, assists the MIF in the implementation of the scholarship program.

In school year 2007-08, the MIF will again support 39 students in Quezon and Aurora provinces.

Touching hearts

Glodava said the MIF had been pooling resources from concerned natives and fellow expatriates from northern Quezon, who are now living in Chile, Saudi Arabia, England, New Zealand, Japan and the United States.

"A donation of at least $125 will take care of one year's needs of one student. We recommend that a prospective donor consider making a donation annually for four years to cover the cost of the entire high school course of one student," she explained.

Scholarships usually include everything, from tuition to books and allowances for housing and transportation.

"We have created the Ambassador Arizala Diplomacy Scholarship at his alma mater—the Lyceum University for deserving students, not necessarily from Metro Infanta. This is a postgraduate scholarship," Glodava explained.

Arizala, who also hails from Infanta and is now based in Chile, is among the active members of the MIF.

All scholars must agree to "pay it forward" by doing some community service for high school students and projects that would provide positive impact to the community for post-graduates.

"These partial requirements determine if MIF will continue funding their scholarships as we don't want recipients to become lax with their studies," Glodava said.

Future leaders

"Our long-term goal is to expand this feature of the MIF so future servant leaders could be developed," she explained.

Glodava cited the success of Rili in organizing the Sulyap Savings and Credit Cooperative, along with neighborhood leaders in Barangay Rizal, Makati. Members of the cooperative pool their resources and provide loans to one another at reasonable interest in times of financial difficulty.

Glodava, who is also the director of communications and stewardship at the St. Thomas Moore Parish in Centennial, Colorado, has worked on the partnership of the parish with the Prelature of Infanta and the SPI.

During a visit to Colorado, former Infanta Bishop Julio Labayen received cans of pennies from children who collected a total of $10,000 to help rebuild a church in the island town of Panukulan.

During the typhoons of 2004, the foundation helped Infanta and its neighboring towns. "Expatriates from all over the world responded immediately to our call for help. Some not only made their own contribution but also raised money in their own locality," Glodava said.

Aside from pursuing causes to benefit their town mates, the foundation links fellow natives now residing in foreign shores through a website (www.infanta.org).

'Youth vote' puts new graduate to town council

By Niña Catherine Calleja
Nagcarlan, Laguna

JC LUCIDO, 22, TOOK AN accountancy course in college and graduated with honors in March. But instead of applying for a job in a private company, he ran for councilor of Nagcarlan town in Laguna and won.

Proclaimed on May 17, Lucido placed second among the eight winning councilors.

It was the "youth vote" that swept him to victory in Nagcarlan, about 100 kilometers south of Manila. He had 7,676 votes from a voters' turnout of 29,282 on May 14.

"The youth really moved for me," Lucido admitted. His votes came almost equally from all the barangays.

Lucido said he knew the young people were interested to participate in the election because during his campaigns and meetings, they were attending and listening attentively.

"It is good to feel that many people trust you," he said.

Lucido said working for a public office was an extension of his extracurricular activities in school and community. He was just on a wider scale of governance now that he was elected councilor, he said.

LUCIDO

Some of the incumbent councilors had asked Lucido to run in October last year.

"I had no plan to run. I told them I was graduating and I planned a work with the private sector afterwards," he said.

But the councilors were persistent. "They told me the municipal government needed my idealism," he said. For five years now, Lucido has been part of the council, having been elected president of the Sangguniang Kabataan.

"During those times, I never clang to anyone, even to our mayor. Whenever we were in session, I took side with what I thought was right," he said.

He said he was convinced to run because of his desire to serve.

Lucido headed the committee on appropriations. All budget and proposed programs of the council passed its scrutiny, he said.

"It was a difficult job. The councilors said I did it well so I knew I am capable of being a councilor," he said.

Lucido said he spent about P50,000 for campaign materials, such as tarpaulins and banners. His strategy was to woo the votes of the youth and the women.

"Many people perceived a politician as someone who could give away money and material things," he said.

Although some people felt bad when their request was denied, they tried hard not to shell out.

"I still believe that the majority of the electorate is educated and discerning," Lucido said.

From the past administration, Lucido saw a number of ordinances passed but not implemented. This may have reflected a misunderstanding between the mayor and the council members, he said.

He cited the ordinance on solid waste management that was never enforced.

One of the programs he wanted to introduce was the scholarship for the out-of-school youths in Nagcarlan.

Lucido also planned to create a youth development council in which the youths, aside from the SK members, could actively participate in local governance. The council will be composed of representatives from school and out-of-school youths in villages, he said.

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1. The Department of Education RO V, through the Regional Funds intends to apply the sum of *Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ONE (1) UNIT "BRAND NEW" POWLRED DIESEL GENERATOR EQUIPMENT, SILENT TYPE, powered by Diesel Engine six (6) cylinder, in-line, direct injection engine, four (4) cycle water cooled. The Generator is capable of supplying: 400 kW (500 kVA) of power for standby application at 0.8 power factor, three (3) phase, 60Hz, 240 volts, at 1800 rpm and comes complete with standard accessories, Labor & Materials Cost for Installation and Transportation Cost. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall automatically rejected at Bid Opening.
2. The *DepED ROV* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for ONE (1) UNIT "BRAND NEW" POWERED DIESEL GENERATOR EQUIPMENT, SILENT TYPE, powered by Diesel Engine six (6) cylinder, in-line, direct injection engine, four (4) cycle water cooled. The Generator is capable of supplying: 400 kW (500 kVA) of power for standby application at 0.8 power factor, three (3) phase 60Hz, 240 volts, at 1800 rpm and comes complete with standard accessories, Labor & Materials Cost for Installation and Transportation Cost. Delivery of the GOODS is required by July 16, 2007. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionar pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republi Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and i restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60% interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens o organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges t Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *DepED ROV* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00am - 5:00pm*
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00)*. The method of payment will be in the form of cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative. *Availability of Bidding Documents is on June 22, 2007 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.*
6. The *DepED ROV* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested Bidders on June 25, 2007, 10:00 A.M. at the Director's Conference Room, DepED ROV, Rawis, Legazpi City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 A.M., July 6, 2007. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check in the amount of *Php 30,000.00* or Bank Guarantee in the amount of *Php 45,000.00* or Surety Bond in the amount of *Php 75,000.00*. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on July 6, 2007, 10:00 A.M. at the Director's Conference Room, DepED ROV, Rawis, Legazpi City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *DepED ROV* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

DepED ROV
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Rawis, Legazpi City
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(Sgd.) ENRIQUE A. LLEGADO
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(PDI—June 21 & 28, 2007)

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Across the NATION

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Priest out as chief gov't negotiator

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S PEACE adviser said the Catholic priest who, he claimed, had been appointed chief peace negotiator with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front had backed out from the post.

Jesus Dureza, who earlier reported that Fr. Eliseo Mercado, OMI, had been appointed to replace resigned chief negotiator Silvestre Afable, said the priest was out of contention as head of the government peace panel in negotiations with the MILF.

This came after Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said during a dinner with INQUIRER editors that Mercado had not been appointed at all to replace Afable, contrary to earlier reports.

Dureza said Mercado found valid the MILF's objection to his being appointed as chief negotiator of the government.

Dureza, in a statement, said Mercado called him up yesterday morning and said he preferred to continue to support the peace process "perhaps in some other nonpartisan capacity."

Dureza announced over the weekend that Mercado would replace Afable, but the MILF objected to it.

"Evidently, after successfully reaching out to the MILF leadership and being informed of its position, Father Mercado decided to decline, saying that he found (MILF) chair (Al Haj) Murad's reasons as valid," Dureza said.

The MILF welcomed the news.

"If he (Mercado) will act as negotiator, he would be doing the functions of the state. He is not an official of the government," said Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson.

"We are not into interfaith dialogue here. This is a political issue. Even the doctrine of separation of Church and State would be violated."

MILF chief negotiator Mohaqher Iqbal confirmed that the group had written the Malaysian government, which was mediating the stalled peace talks, regarding the case of Afable and Mercado.

"If Mercado will be the next negotiator, we will have again impasse in the talks," said Iqbal.

"Mercado is our close friend. He facilitated the initial stage of the peace talks. On the personal level, especially in the actual negotiation, there are instances that we're shouting at each other in the negotiating table."

The confusing messages from government officials had put Mercado in an embarrassing situation since he had welcomed his appointment and had expressed confidence he could contribute to the resolution of the Moro rebellion.

Mercado is known for his deep commitment to the peace process in Mindanao as he served before as a go-between the government and the Moro rebel groups.

He was elected floor leader of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development Consultative Assembly and served as chair of the now-defunct Independent Ceasefire Monitoring Committee of the Philippine government and the MILF.

The MILF, which is engaged in peace talks with the government, signed a ceasefire agreement with the government on July 19, 2003. But in September last year, talks between the government and the MILF hit a snag after both parties failed to agree on the issue of ancestral domain.

The MILF, estimated to have 13,000 members, wants at least 1,000 villages included in the proposed Muslim homeland but the government said it could only allow the inclusion of about 600.

The government insists that the formation of the future Bangsamoro entity would have to be decided in a plebiscite. *Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

Abra pols get back control of cops after elections

BAGUIO CITY—THE MAY 14 elections have restored the administrative control of Abra politicians over the police force, which the government withdrew in 2006 because of cases of politically motivated slayings in the province since 1998.

Everdina Echalar-Doctor, Cordillera director of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, said supervisory powers over the police are included in the administrative authority that empowers elected officials after winning the elections.

Doctor said the government must study the impact of this legal loophole if it will continue to place Abra under the custody of a special police task force.

Former Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes penalized Abra officials last year by removing the deputization that allowed them to control their local police forces.

But if some incumbent officials won a fresh mandate, Doctor said, "they already have these powers back unless the DILG and the National Police Commission (Napolcom) again withdraw the deputization granted to them by the election."

Reyes based his actions on the findings of a government fact-finding mission that many Abra politicians had employed armed groups and assassins. Doctor was a member of the mission.

Reyes also relieved the Abra police force because of the mission's findings that some of them had acted as bodyguards of local politicians.

Cordillera police officials on Wednesday said representatives from the Abra police and the community were evaluating whether they still needed to be under the special custody of a police task force.

Senior Supt. Donato Bacquian, director of the Cordillera police's operations and planning division, said the community needed to determine whether their province's security has been assured now that many of the politicians in office have lost their reelection bid.

Doctor said among the potential beneficiaries of this policy (supervision over the local police) is outgoing Abra Gov. Vicente Valera, who ran for representative against Lagayan Mayor Cecilia Luna, one of his critics.

Doctor said the Commission on Elections has not yet declared a winner in the race because of legal issues surrounding the canvassing of votes cast in Tineg town.

In the last Comelec count, Luna led Valera by more than 600 votes.

Doctor said the Office of the President was preparing interim appointments for Tineg's mayoral and council seats, in case a vacuum is created. *Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

THE MURDER charge was read to Duntugan during his arraignment June 20 for the killing of Peace Corps volunteer Julia Campbell.
MELVIN GASCON/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Accused in Campbell slay pleads not guilty

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAGAWE, IFUGAO—THE LONE accused in the killing of United States Peace Corps volunteer Julia Campbell on Wednesday entered a "not guilty" plea to the murder charge filed against him before the regional trial court here, months after confessing to the crime.

The arraignment of Juan Donald Duntugan pushed through following two postponements sought by his lawyer, Pedro Mayam-o.

With head bowed, Duntugan, 24, listened as the court interpreter read the criminal information in English and translated it in Ifugao. Immediately, he uttered his plea to the court employee and returned to his seat.

Duntugan's plea prompted Judge Esther Piscoso-Flor to set the pre-trial for July 23, formally paving the way for a full-blown trial of one of the biggest murder cases this upland province has witnessed.

Duntugan is facing charges for the murder of Campbell, a 40-year-old English teacher assigned to Albay. Campbell was found dead on April 18, 10 days after she was reported missing while trekking alone in the village of Batad in Banaue town, about 30 kilometers from here.

On April 27, Duntugan surrendered to the Ifugao police and supposedly admitted killing Campbell in a fit of blind rage during the investigation. Earlier, he had said he mistook Campbell for his enemy in his village.

In the criminal information, Duntugan was accused of killing Campbell, attended by "aggravating circumstances" of treachery, evident premeditation and cruelty.

Wearing denim jackets and handcuffs, the woodcarver's head was bowed almost throughout the 20-minute proceedings. He occasionally glanced at his wife Grace, who sat with relatives at the back row.

After the arraignment, Duntugan declined to issue a statement to reporters.

His lawyer said Duntugan had to enter the plea because "he was being accused of doing things that he did not do."

Private prosecutors said they were not surprised by the plea of innocence.

"While we were on the road going to (Ifugao), we just felt that he will enter a 'not guilty' plea," said lawyer Reynaldo Agranzamendez.

Agranzamendez said he held a teleconference with Campbell's family in Fairfax, Virginia, two days before the arraignment.

"The victim's parents had emphasized how much they wanted that justice would be done for Julia," he said.

2 Mindanao towns added to list of cities

LAMITAN CITY, BASILAN—DESPITE calls for a moratorium on the creation of new cities, two more Mindanao towns made it to the League of Cities of the Philippines.

On Monday evening, Lamitan became the second city for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) after Marawi in Lanao del Sur.

Voters in Isabela City, which is also part of this ARMM province, and in Cotabato City, which was part of Maguindanao before becoming a component city for Shariff Kabunsuan province, voted down the proposal to make them part of ARMM in August 2001.

Wilfredo Daraug, Basilan elections supervisor, told the INQUIRER that Lamitan voters were one in saying that their town should become a city.

"26,636 voted for affirmative and only 177 for negative," he said, adding that there are 34,908 voters here.

Mayor Roderick Furigay said the transformation of Lamitan into a city "has a great effect and would provide big changes to our local economy and image."

"It was really a struggle because of the strong objection from the League of Cities," he said.

Furigay said now that Lamitan has become a city, its share of the internal revenue allotment, which could be used to fund development projects, would also increase.

In Mati, Davao Oriental, voters also approved the transformation of the capital town into a city.

"I am very, very happy," a jubilant Davao Oriental Rep. Joel Mayo Almario, who authored the cityhood bill, said.

Even Mayor Francisco Rabat, who did not always agree with Almario's political moves, said the transformation of the town into a city was very welcome.

"Our dream has finally come true. I am so happy," he said. *Julie S. Alipala and Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Inquirer Mindanao*

Pacquiao takes college entrance exams

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—DETERMINED to earn a college diploma, Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao went to the Notre Dame of Dadiangas University (NDDU) here on Wednesday afternoon to take an entrance exam.

NDDU president Bro. John Tan told reporters that Pacquiao must take the test to determine which course he wanted to take.

Pacquiao expressed interest in taking up AB Political Science. But in a radio interview in Manila, he said he wanted to take up a business course because a political science course was just for people who wanted to become lawyers.

The Filipino ring idol was warmly welcomed by Tan, some faculty members and students.

Ready for tests

Before proceeding to the office of the guidance counselor where he took the exams, Pacquiao dropped by the office of Tan and talked briefly with the president.

Tan asked Pacquiao, "Are you ready now to take the exams?" The champ smiled and replied "Yes."

Tan escorted him to the guidance counselor's office.

Before they parted, Tan tapped Pacquiao in the back, saying, "Good luck."

When asked by reporters what was Pacquiao's chances of passing the test, Tan said: "I am optimistic that he'll make it considering his exposure and basic knowledge. The fact that he was accelerated by the DepEd is indicative that Manny is capable (of passing the test)."

Inclinations

Tan noted that Pacquiao was inclined toward taking arts and business courses.

"Maybe, he (Pacquiao) would do well in political science, governance and social services or business administration and management," the NDDU president said.

Pacman's course, he said, would depend on the results of the test.

Tan added the test was sort of an ability and aptitude test.

It was composed of three categories—mental ability (40 percent), numerical reasoning (30 percent) and verbal ability (30 percent).

Aurna de Leon, officer in charge of the NDDU Guidance and Testing Center who acted as proctor for Pacquiao, said the exams would last for one hour and 40 minutes.

As of late yesterday afternoon, Pacquiao was still taking the exams. If he hurdles the exam, he would be meeting again with Tan to discuss how he was going to pursue his studies. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, Inquirer Mindanao*

RETURN TO LAGUNA CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Vitarich Feeds Inc., pioneer in animal and livestock feeds in the country, recently launched a new program for the benefit of its loyal animal and livestock farmers. Vitarich, with the help of animal health care leader Gromax and animal genetics provider Luz Farms Inc., launched VDay Para sa Bayani ng Ating Bayan. Members of the Vitarich family pose for a picture during the launching.

THE US ARMY Honor Guards perform a rifle volley for slain US Army Staff Sgt. Greg Gagarin during Gagarin's burial Wednesday in his hometown, Candon City, Ilocos Sur. Gagarin was killed in Iraq on June 3.

LEONCIO BALBIN JR/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

4th Filipino soldier killed in Iraq buried

By Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Northern Luzon

CANDON CITY—IT WAS A SILENT BURIAL for US Army Staff Sgt. Greg Gagarin in his hometown here on Wednesday.

Gagarin, 38, who died in a bomb explosion in Iraq on June 3, used to set off firecrackers every time he came home at Sitio Cinarrayam in Barangay Caterman.

But he had to settle for a rifle volley by the US Army Honor Guards during his burial at the Caterman public cemetery, overlooking the lot where he had planned to build his retirement home.

Brig. Gen. Simeon Trombitas, commander of the US Army special operations command in Korea, described Gagarin as the leader and disciplinarian of his troops based in Iraq.

"He is like their father figure," said Trombitas.

Trombitas awarded Gagarin the Bronze Star for Valor and the Purple Heart, posthumously. The medals were accepted by his wife Elma and his father Ernesto, a retired master sergeant of the US Air Force.

Gagarin, who had served the US Army for the past 16 years, was on his second tour of duty in the Operation Iraqi Freedom when the vehicle that he and four other soldiers were riding in was hit by an explosion in Thania, Iraq. Gagarin died from wounds during the explosion.

He and his group belonged to the team supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. They belonged to the 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team) in Fort Lewis, Washington State.

"He was more than a great artillery man. He disciplined his men and worked with them," Trombitas said.

He said Gagarin's teammates described him as having a vast knowledge of artillery and always had the great drive to be the fastest in action.

"His soldiers believed in him and we all cared deeply for him," said Trombitas.

Gagarin's brother, Glen, described him as compassionate.

"He was always there for us, in good times and in bad. He never talked back and he often sacrificed for us," Glen said.

He said Gagarin was especially caring for his wife and children, Natasha and Troy.

Gagarin, who was born here, had lived in Los Angeles, California to raise his family. He went to the States when he was 10 years old.

Gagarin was the fourth American soldier of Filipino heritage killed in Iraq since May 17.

Last week, US Army Sgt. Richard Valiant Correa, 25, was buried in his hometown of Lingayen, Pangasinan.

Correa was killed on May 29 when a bomb exploded near him and another soldier while they were on foot patrol in Ilbu Falris, Iraq.

Pfc. Victor Michael Fontanilla, 23, was among three paratroopers killed on May 17 when a roadside bomb exploded near their vehicle in Iskandariya, Iraq.

On May 24, Cpl. Mark Ryan Climaco Caguioa, 21, died at the National Naval Medical Center in Maryland after receiving an incorrect blood transfusion in Iraq.

Caguioa, who also hailed from California and was born to Filipino parents, was being treated for wounds he suffered from a bomb explosion in Baghdad.

> 'His soldiers believed in him…'

Tension fills survey of land marked for CARP

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—TENSION filled the conduct of a survey of areas marked for distribution to agrarian reform beneficiaries in an estate in La Castellana, Negros Occidental.

Alexis Arsenal, agrarian reform regional director, said farmers identified with landowner Roberto Cuenca formed a barricade to prevent the survey team from entering the farm.

Stones were thrown, forcing policemen from the Philippine National Police Regional Mobile Group (RMG) to shield the DAR personnel.

Senior Supt. Rosendo Franco, provincial police chief, said the standoff didn't last, though.

There was shoving and pushing but the protesting Cuenca farmers eventually relented and allowed the survey team to get in, Franco said.

About 300 workers associated with Cuenca and their families blocked the entry of the DAR team, farm union leader Roger Miravalles said.

The team was to survey the area awarded to Task Force Mapalad (TFM) members and set the boundaries.

The barricade of pro-management workers confronted the team when they arrived at the hacienda at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday.

As the RMG men pushed forward, a scuffle occurred and stones were thrown.

Edgar Santillan of the TFM said he fell when he was pushed but a policeman helped him up.

Miravalles said two members of the Cuenca group—Benjamin Santillan, 41, and Renato Mata, 37—were injured.

Santillan, who was at the barricade, said he was hit in the face when an RMG member pushed him with a shield.

Mata said another RMG member struck him in the head with a stick.

Miravalles said the DAR had no legal right to conduct the survey since the court had cancelled the Certificate of Land Ownership Award (Cloa) given to the TFM farmers.

"The workers from our side are only defending their right to the land, too," he said.

Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman earlier said there were no more legal impediments for the demarcation survey.

Mario Diaz, counsel of Cuenca, reminded police and the DAR of an existing writ of preliminary injunction issued by the regional trial court of La Carlota, preventing the DAR from conducting surveys and other activities related to the planned installation of farmer beneficiaries.

The case is now at the Supreme Court, Diaz said.

About 100 Army soldiers and 300 policemen provided security to prevent an outbreak of violence during the survey.

Arsenal said eight members of the DAR survey team completed their tasks.

Talks were now under way to ensure that the opposing farmers' groups would coexist peacefully, he said.

Pangandaman said he had asked Arsenal and provincial agrarian reform officer Stephen Leonidas to go to Manila on Thursday so they could discuss how to handle the Velez Malaga case.

Earlier this month, TFM members seeking the segregation of the land due them entered the portion of the farm where Pangandaman had installed them but, in a shooting that ensued, two of them were killed and six others were injured.

Police filed charges against the three security guards implicated in the June 4 shooting.

RAY ZAMBRANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

SOME of the milkfish that fish cage operators collected before a fish kill in Anda, Pangasinan could wipe out their stocks. The fish kill was traced to the depletion of oxygen supply in the waters as a result of overstocking. The town's mayor attributed it to plain greed.

Fish cages blocking flow of river

ANDA, PANGASINAN—OFFICIALS OF the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources have asked the local governments of Anda and Bolinao to reestablish the navigation lane along the Kakiputan Channel that fish traps have encroached in and obstructed water flow.

The structures have also contributed to water pollution in the area, they said.

BFAR Director Malcolm Sarmiento said the area was cleared of fishery structures after the massive fish kill in Bolinao in 2002, but these had returned, impeding water flow that could have led to the recent fish kill in this town.

"We reestablished a 200-meter wide navigation lane, but this has narrowed again because of the fishery structures," he told the INQUIRER.

Sarmiento and Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap on Tuesday inspected the area where a massive fish kill struck last week. At least P100 million worth of *bangus* (milkfish) was lost in the fish kill, local officials said.

Other officials estimate the losses at only P32 million.

Sarmiento said he would ask the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (Namria) to delineate the boundaries between the towns sharing the Kakiputan Channel to improve the management and use of the waters.

"What they have now are provisional boundaries. For better management, the Namria should set the boundaries," he said.

The channel is shared by Anda, Bolinao and Bani towns and Alaminos City.

Yap and Sarmiento asked Anda Mayor Nestor Pulido and Bolinao Mayor Alfonso Celeste to exert more efforts in policing and managing the fishery area as "these are under their jurisdiction."

They also asked the town officials to issue permits for the structures.

"They promised to go after the owners without permits. I think they will now be more circumspect in issuing permits," Sarmiento said.

When asked if the local officials failed to implement fishery regulations that led to the fish kill, Sarmiento said: "That is the implication."

"The parameters were put in place. The problem all boils down to enforcement," he said.

Operators of fish pens and cages acknowledged that they overstocked their structures with *bangus* and this may have contributed to the fish kill when the neap tide (lowest tide where water hardly moves or becomes stagnant) occurred last week.

"They promised to follow the code of conduct for aquaculture," Sarmiento said.

He said the BFAR would meet with fishery officials and operators on Friday and discuss ways to effectively enforce regulations in the industry.

In Alaminos, agriculture office personnel dismantled last week six illegal fish traps near Alo Island. The structures were reportedly owned by fishermen from Anda.

"The dismantling was conducted to clear the area of illegally constructed fish traps (locally known as *pasabing*) that continue to proliferate and cause obstruction… to navigation and hindering some [fish] species during their spawning season," Milberth Ferrer, city aquaculturist, said in a report. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that PROVISIONAL RECEIPTS (PR's) issued to agents with the following number are hereby declared null and void effective June 12, 2007.

21921-21930B; 79151-79160B; 81641-81650B; 0061-0070 BAT; 0101-0110 BAT; 0151-0160 BUT; 0031-0040 CEB; 0011-0020 GMA; 0021-0030 GMA; 0041-0050 GMA; 0031-0040 VAL; 0011-0020 CDO

FORTUNE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY INC.
162 Legaspi St., Legaspi Village Makati City

(PDI -June 21, 2007)

VICTORIAS
MILLING COMPANY, INC

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC., Victorias City, Negros Occidental wishes to invite interested bidders/contractors to pre-qualify and to bid for the retrofitting of **Vacuum Circuit Breakers** for the vacant switchgear cubicle for main power protection of proposed Cooling Tower as detailed under Electrical Operations' **JR No. 32803A.**

Interested bidders must submit the following pre-qualification requirements:

- Letter of intent to Bid
- VMC Accreditation papers for those who are not yet accredited
- Registered and in good standing with SEC or DTI
- Certificate of Registration with BIR
- Certificate of Membership with SSS, Philhealth, HDMF, Pag-ibig, etc.
- Certificate from Department of Labor and Employment
- Has a good track record and satisfactory performance as attested to by at least three (3) clients
- Latest audited Financial Statements stamped by BIR and certified by a Certified Public Accountant

Bidding kits are available at the MCD Office and at Makati Office on **June 22 to 29, 2007**, after payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00. Kindly submit the needed requirements on or before **June 30, 2007** to qualify to bid. The pre-bidding conference will be held on **July 5, 2007, 2:30 P.M.** at the **HRD Training Center, VMC Millsite, Victorias City, Negros Occidental**. The commercial bidding will be announced thereafter.

For further inquiries, please contact **Messrs. Carlos S. Quiatchon or Dan C. Labrador** at VMC Millsite at telephone numbers **(034) 399-3696 to 97** and (local) **2351 or 2309**, and **Mr. Ernesto "Toto" Oligo** at VMC Makati Office at telephone numbers **(02)899-0485** and **(02)890-7061**. Also visit our website www.victoriasmilling.com and e-mail us at mcd@victoriasmilling.com.

Victorias Milling Company, Inc., reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Company. The Company assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder/s for any expense/s or loss that they may incur in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **TERESITA V. ILAGAN**
Chairperson, Senior Bidding Committee

(PDI–June 21, 2007)

Late SPORTS

'Fiesta' semis: Rampaging Bulls whip Phone Pals

Alaska grabs 1-0 lead vs San Miguel

GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Alaska vs San Miguel
7:20 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Red Bull

By Musong R. Castillo

IT TOOK RED BULL JUST THE first half to shake off the rust of a long layoff, and the second to dominate.

Still sharp despite a 20-day break, the defending PBA Fiesta Cup champion Bulls erased a 15-point deficit in the second period with ease and then held off Talk 'N Text for a 107-101 Game 1 victory at the start of their semifinal series last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

"When we trailed (by 15) and then made it a one-point game at the end of the first half, I knew then that we were going to be OK," coach Yeng Guiao said. "The second half became easier for us."

In the second game, Sonny Thoss had a tip-in and two free throws down the stretch while Rosell Ellis scored on an awkward baby hook with 1:44 to play as Alaska escaped with a 100-99 thriller over San Miguel in Game 1 of their half of the semifinal bracket.

Larry Fonacier, last season's top rookie, scored 14 points in only 13 minutes of action coming off the bench, the final 11 coming in the deciding period, which scuttled numerous rallies by the Phone Pals.

Great talker

"Most of the time, I really finish [games] with Larry," Guiao said, when asked why he played the former Ateneo gunslinger limited minutes but opted for him in the most crucial times. "He justified that role tonight."

More stories on A21 to 24

Game 2 is set tomorrow also at the Big Dome, and Guiao, a great talker who knows how to back up his words, sounded even more confident.

"As rusty and inactive as we were [coming into the game], we were able to stay with them," he said. "There won't be any major adjustments on our part [for Game 2]. We're now more confident going into the second game."

Looking to become the first team to repeat here, Red Bull, like Alaska, made it to this round outright after topping the elimination round. Along with it came a vacation of more than two weeks as the seven other teams behind them slugged it out in two more rounds.

James Penny literally made the vacation worth it, planing back from the United States just a week before the start of this round.

And he played as if he never left, brandishing his mean all-around form in finishing with 26 points, 18 rebounds, five assists and the same number of blocks despite playing for just 37 minutes because of foul trouble.

Mighty fightback

Talk 'N Text, which got this far after eliminating Air21 in the quarterfinals, led 34-19 early in the second period and looked like it had everything in control.

But Penny spearheaded a mighty fightback by the Bulls, scoring 11 of his total the rest of the way and getting help from Leo Najorda as the half ended with the Phone Pals clinging to a 45-44 lead.

"It was nice and refreshing to come off a vacation," Guiao said. "But all my apprehensions (on the team's sharpness) vanished right after we wiped out that huge deficit."

The scores:

First Game

RED BULL 107—Penny 26, Fonacier 14, Bagulo 13, Najorda 12, Valenzuela 9, Alvarez 8, Robinson 7, Hrabak 7, Sharma 4, Ybañez 3, Bugia 2, Cruz 2, Camaso 0.

TALK 'N TEXT 101—Sullinger 27, Washington 19, Cardona 15, Aliado 15, Carey 10, Billones 8, De Ocampo 5, Belano 2, Fran 0.

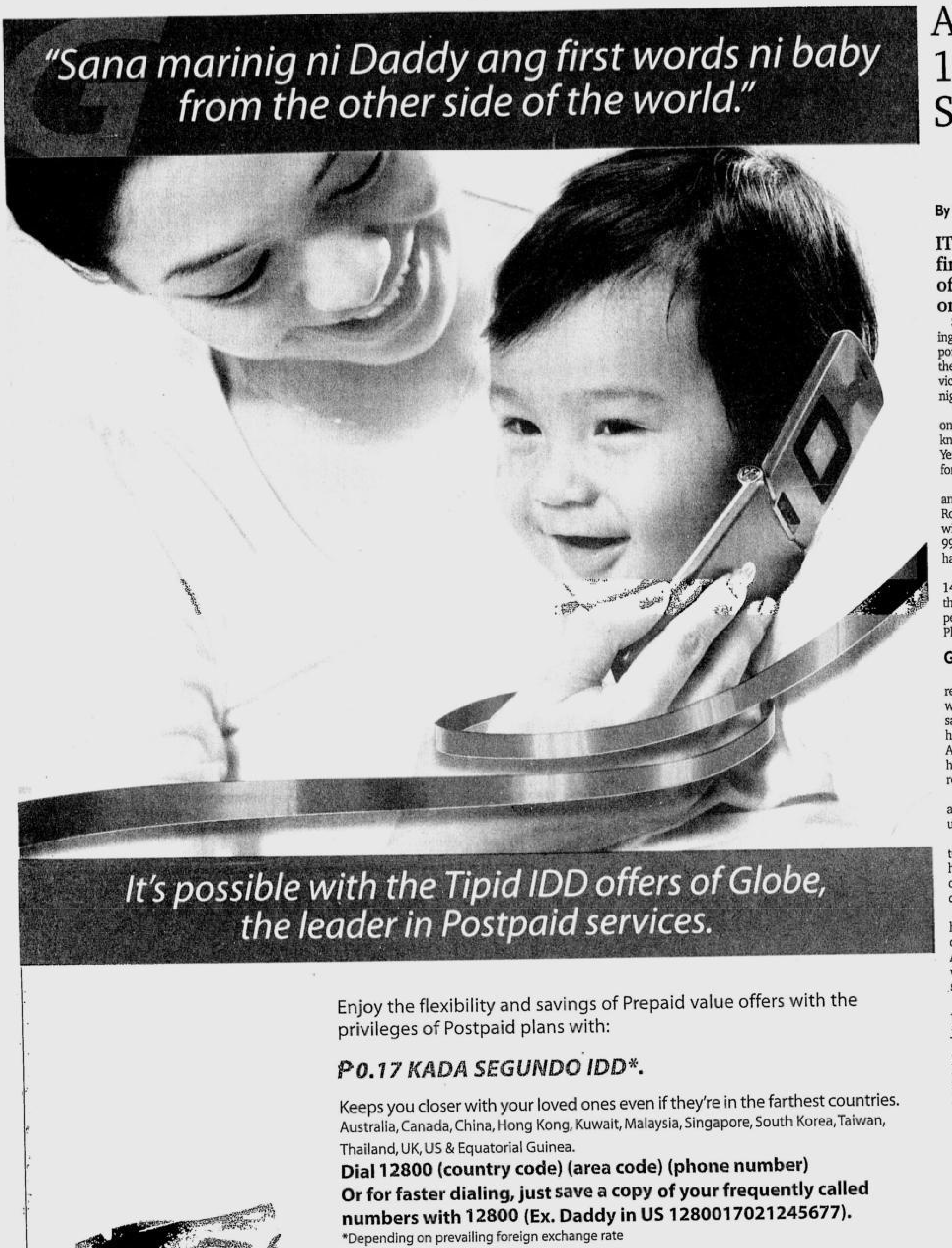
Quarters: 19-22, 44-45, 75-72, 107-101

Second Game

ALASKA 100—Ellis 28, Thoss 19, Cariaso 14, Belasco 12, Laure 7, Cortez 7, Ferriols 6, Miller 5, Juinio 2, Hugnatan 0.

SAN MIGUEL BEER 99—Young 27, Wilson 13, Villanueva 12, Ildefonso 10, Tenorio 9, Calaguio 8, Peña 8, Racela 7, Gonzales 5, Adriano 0.

Quarters: 25-28, 52-44, 84-73, 100-99



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PLAYTIME

Children vie for a choice spot at the Plazuela de Santa Isabel in Intramuros where they spend one lazy afternoon after school.

ERIK ARAZAS

Bongbong stakes claim on prime land

Marcos eyes 18.4-ha Pasig property

By Volt Contreras

THE SON OF FORMER PRESIDENT FERDINAND Marcos is claiming ownership of 18.4-hectares of prime property in Pasig City, 21 years after it was turned over to the government by one of the late dictator's alleged cronies to avoid prosecution.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. yesterday asserted his family's right over the piece of urban prime land in a complaint filed in the Sandiganbayan's first division.

The property, once the site of the "Payanig sa Pasig" theme park, is now a commercial area bordered by Meralco and Ortigas Avenues and Julia Vargas Street.

The Marcos scion asked the court to start hearing his side in two civil cases. Two other private entities have expressed interest in reclaiming the land from the government—Ortigas and Co. Limited Partnership (OCLP) and Ricardo Silverio of Anchor Estate Corp. (AEC).

BONGBONG Marcos

In his complaint, the younger Marcos said the property was purchased from OCLP by his father in 1968 for P6.4 million at P40 per sq-m. He added that Marcos sealed the deal through Jose Yao Campos, his (Bongbong's) godfather.

Campos then placed the land under the name of Maharlika Estates Corp. (later renamed AEC). In 1971, AEC transferred the rights to the property in favor of Mid-Pasig Land Development Corp.

State witness

In 1986, after Marcos was ousted from office, Campos turned state witness for the Presidential Commission on Good Government. Campos later forged a compromise deal in which he was given immunity from prosecution after turning over to the PCGG several companies and properties like "Payanig" which he supposedly held "in trust" for the deposed leader.

Bongbong, however, insisted that Maharlika, AEC and Mid-Pasig were actually "organized by Campos on behalf of my father."

He added that his father, who was forced to go into exile after his ouster, was not given a chance to challenge the Campos-PCGG deal.

Bongbong said he initiated the claim after reading reports on the PCGG's plan to lease the property at below market rates.

On the other hand, OCLP has claimed that the Ortigas family was only forced to sell the property to the ousted president. The firm has been trying to forge a deal with the PCGG under which the government would get 65 percent, with the rest going to OCLP.

The deal has not prospered due to disagreements over the property's value.

With Daxim Lucas

Police aid through text hotline for south Metro

By Julie M. Aurelio

RESIDENTS IN THE SOUTHERN part of the metropolis will soon be able to ask the police for help through text messaging.

Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales, Southern Police District director, yesterday announced the launching next month of "Be Smart," a text hotline that would receive complaints or reports about ongoing crimes in the area.

"We are hoping to implement the text hotline project by July. Texters will find this new service very useful in helping prevent crimes," Rosales said.

Those who want to send a text message should type the words "SPD HELP" followed by their message and send it to 269. The number applies to both Smart and Globe subscribers.

Rosales said the hotline is a joint project of the police and Smart Communications.

According to the police official, all police stations in southern Metro Manila would receive computers from Smart Communications as part of the text hotline project. "Our police officers will be able to use these computers to address the complaints and reports texted through the 269 hotline," Rosales said. "Texters will even be able to get anticriminality tips from our text hotline."

The SPD chief the other day said he was intensifying anticriminality operations in areas under his jurisdiction which include the cities of Makati, Pasay, Parañaque, Taguig, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa and Pateros town.

This month, bank robbers struck thrice in Makati and Parañaque, leaving nine people dead and nine others injured.

A notorious robbery holdup gang, the Ampang Colangco group, was believed to be behind two of the incidents—both failed attempts to rob bank armored cars at SM City Sucat, Parañaque City on June 4 and in Barangay Pio del Pilar, Makati City on June 12.

Rosales added that the SPD would be distributing at least 100,000 stickers and 30,000 posters to inform the public about the text hotline project.

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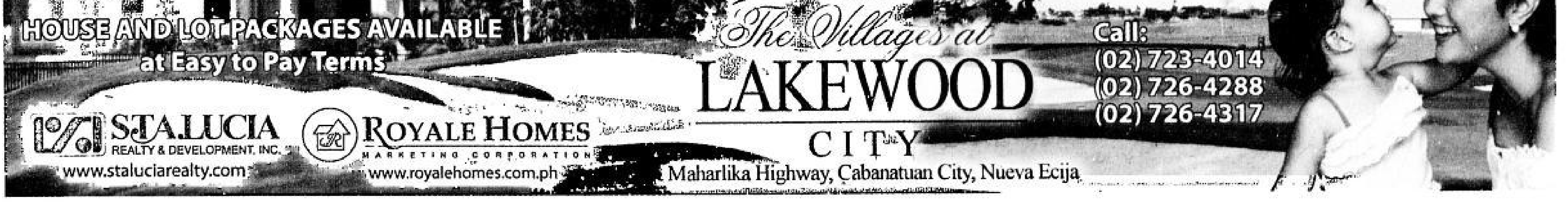

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Trader in drug case linked to kidnap, murder

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE QUEZON CITY POLICE have linked the businessman arrested with Bucloc, Abra Mayor Mailed Molina in a drug operation last week to several kidnap for ransom and murder cases.

Ricardo "Ritchie" Watanabe, 32, according to the police, was a former confidential agent of the Philippine National Police's defunct Narcotics Command (Narcom). He was under the direct supervision of Supt. John Campos who headed the Narcom's Intelligence Division, police added.

Campos was shot dead in 2002 by still unidentified gunmen.

According to a police official who asked for anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to media, Watanabe's co-respondents in the kidnap and murder cases included former PNP chief now Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Companions

The police said that in 2001, Mary "Rosebud" Ong, who identified herself as a former Narcom confidential agent, accused several ranking police officials, including Lacson, Campos, former Narcom director Chief Supt. Reynaldo Acop; former Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino and several civilians, including Watanabe, of kidnapping, murder and "recycling" the illegal drugs they seized in a series of police operations. Charges were later filed against them in connection with the abduction and death of Chinese nationals Chong Hiu Ming and Wong Kam Chong; the kidnapping of Zeng Jia Xuan, Zeng Kang Fang, Hong Zhen Quiao and James Ong.

Link

The group was also linked to the kidnapping and murder of Calvin Wong in November 1998 as well as the abduction of Tan Ka Cheung.

The cases were filed at the Department of Justice and set for preliminary investigation six years ago.

The police official, however, said that Watanabe's other cases would not affect their current investigation following his arrest on June 13.

Records

Based on police records, Watanabe, Molina and his driver, Ricardo Verzoza, were arrested while selling two kilos of marijuana and 800 grams of hashish to an undercover policeman in Barangay Central, Quezon City.

Apart from the drugs, also seized from the trio were an automatic rifle, a .45 caliber pistol and assorted ammunition.

The three were subsequently charged with violating Republic Act No. 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 and illegal possession of firearms and ammunition.

According to the police official, there were no standing arrest warrants against Watanabe but he added that they were looking into his background.

Asked about Watanabe's specific participation on the June 13 incident, the source said, "We are not ready to divulge that."

The preliminary investigation of the cases against Watanabe, Lacson and the other co-respondents was set aside by the Supreme Court in an en banc decision dated Feb. 11, 2005.

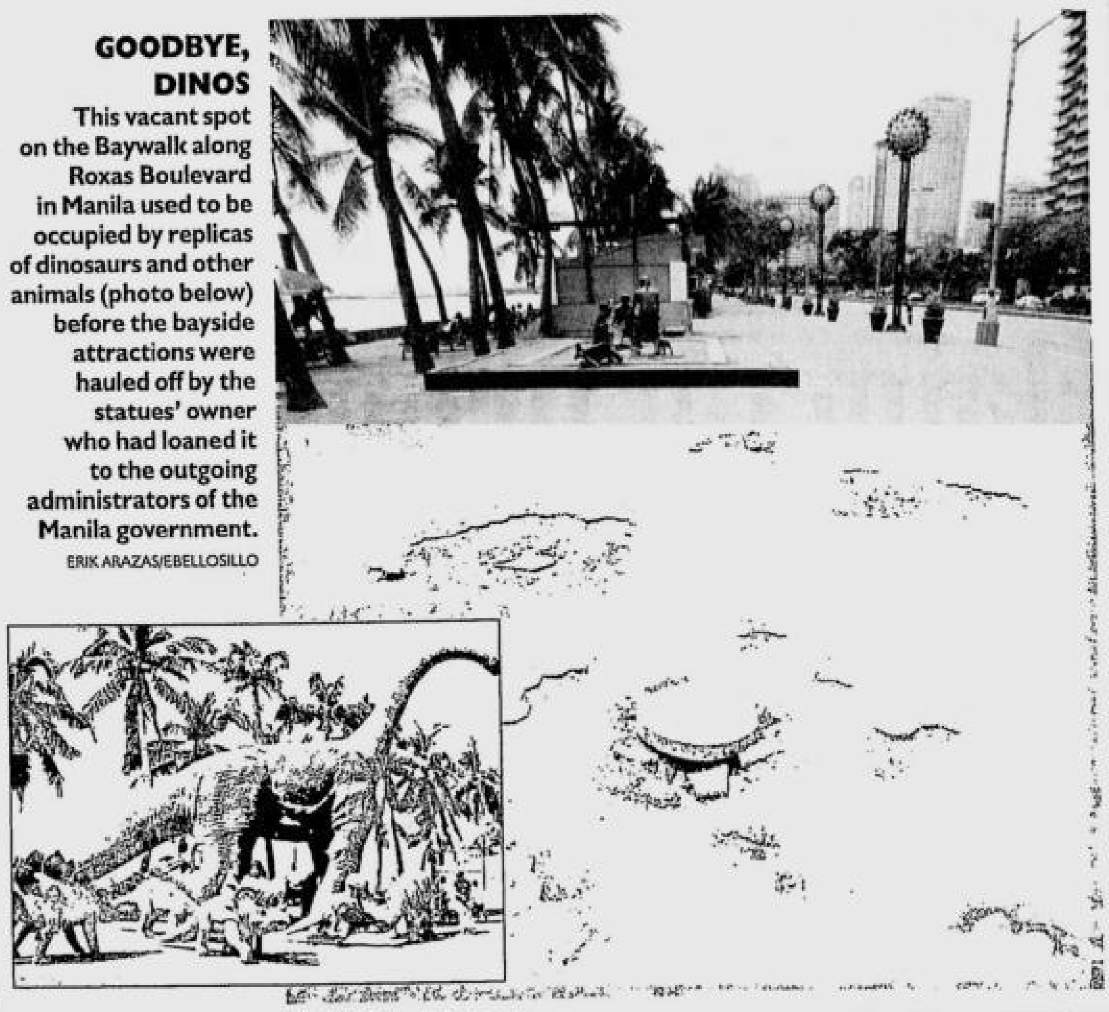
Jurisdiction

The court ruled in favor of the respondents who questioned whether or not the justice department had jurisdiction over the case as a similar case had also been filed in the Office of the Ombudsman.

The DOJ, however, asked the High Tribunal to reconsider its decision, saying that the cases were filed separately by different parties.

The issue has yet to be resolved by the Supreme Court.

The INQUIRER tried to contact Lacson to get his reaction, but calls to his cell phone went unanswered.



GOODBYE, DINOS This vacant spot on the Baywalk along Roxas Boulevard in Manila used to be occupied by replicas of dinosaurs and other animals (photo below) before the bayside attractions were hauled off by the statues' owner who had loaned it to the outgoing administrators of the Manila government.

ERIK ARAZAS/EBELLOSILLO

Taguig's day care kids can now start day right with hot meals

By Julie M. Aurelio

OVER 9,000 CHILDREN IN Taguig City's 117 day care centers can now look forward to learning their lessons on a full stomach.

The city's social welfare office launched on Monday a feeding program to reduce, if not totally eliminate malnutrition, and improve the health of schoolchildren in Taguig, according to Mayor Freddie Tinga.

"The alarming rate of hunger and malnutrition in the country calls for more aggressive action on the part of both the local and national governments. We believe feeding programs address these problems by providing much-needed relief from hunger," Tinga said.

Nitz Jordan, social welfare chief, said each student would be given *lugaw* (rice porridge) with egg or chicken and a glass of milk daily before the start of classes.

"We already recorded the children's weight before we implemented the program. After 42 days, we will check again if they made any significant progress," Jordan told the INQUIRER.

She added that the food ration is equivalent to one-third of the daily recommended energy and nutrient intake for children.

"The children are even motivated to attend classes regularly because of the promise of a free meal. Some parents cannot afford to give them breakfast before sending them off to school," Jordan said.

A pet project of Kaye Tinga, the mayor's wife, the program has been in place since 2004 in the city's registered day care centers.

Man gets double life term for killing sleeping victims

By Margaux C. Ortiz

KILLING A SLEEPING PERSON constitutes murder.

A Quezon City Regional Trial Court judge made this declaration yesterday as she sentenced a laborer to double life imprisonment for killing two of his co-workers more than a decade ago.

Roel Sally was also ordered to pay the families of victims Edwin Lucas and Jose Bersero a total of P150,000 as indemnity.

Court records showed that Sally hit the two men with an iron pipe after a drinking spree at the Nikon Iron Works office on Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City in January 1994.

Roger Lara, Sally's co-worker, said he saw the accused hit the sleeping victims after he had one too many. Sally denied the charges, saying he did not even know the victims.

Judge Fatima Gonzales-Asdala of Quezon City RTC 87 said in her decision that "denial and alibi are the weakest defenses."

"A person who is sleeping is defenseless and generally presumed to be unaware of what will come to him," she added.

DID YOU KNOW

THE DEVELOPMENT Academy of the Philippines (DAP) is a government-owned and controlled corporation established in 1973 to promote and support the country's developmental efforts and to carry out human resource development programs for leaders of key sectors of the government. It also conducts research and produces publications on governance and management. Its founding institutions are the Development Bank of the Philippines, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Philippine National Bank, Government Service Insurance System and National Economic and Development Authority. The DAP has an office in Pasig City. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

Teen out for extra money with stolen jeep nabbed

By Nancy Carvajal

A 15-YEAR-OLD-BOY WAS ARrested by barangay watchmen in Malabon City yesterday after he was caught driving his employer's jeepney to pick up early morning passengers.

According to P02 Rommel Habig of the Malabon City police, the boy was apprehended at around 1:20 a.m, yesterday while driving the vehicle at the corner of M.H. Del Pilar and Templor Street.

Habig said the jeepney owner, Roderick Azagra of Templor St., Santolan, Malabon City, together with barangay volunteers, launched a search for the jeepney shortly after he discovered it was missing.

During the investigation, the boy, who worked as " a wash boy" for Azagra's jeepney pool, claimed it was his first time to "borrow" the jeep and ply the route for at least 30 minutes.

"He said he just wanted to earn extra income that he would give to his mother,'" said Habig.

But he added that what the boy did was illegal, besides putting his passengers' safety in danger. "He committed several violations, including driving without a license and car theft," the investigator added.

Because of the nature of his job, the boy had access to the keys of the fleet of jeepneys owned by Azagra parked at Templor St., Habig said, adding that the boy probably saw an opportunity because the vehicles are not used at night.

"When I heard the sound of a running engine, I thought it was just one of the drivers who wanted an early start but instead, I saw the suspect," Azagra said.

He added he tried to stop the boy, but the suspect was gone by the time he reached the parking lot. The boy has been turned over to the Department of Social Welfare Development for counseling.

Despite rising cases, no malaria outbreak—DOH

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH yesterday declared there was no malaria outbreak in Antipolo City despite the over 300 cases reported in the city in the last six months.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, however, said this was no reason to let their guard down as the number of malaria cases usually peak at the onset of the rainy season, between June and August.

There were only 184 malaria cases in the city in the first half last year, according to National Epidemiology Center director Enrique Tayag.

Although this year's number of cases are almost double compared to the same period in 2006, the figure is still below the threshold level for the declaration of an outbreak, he said.

METROBRIEFS

Two dead in mishap

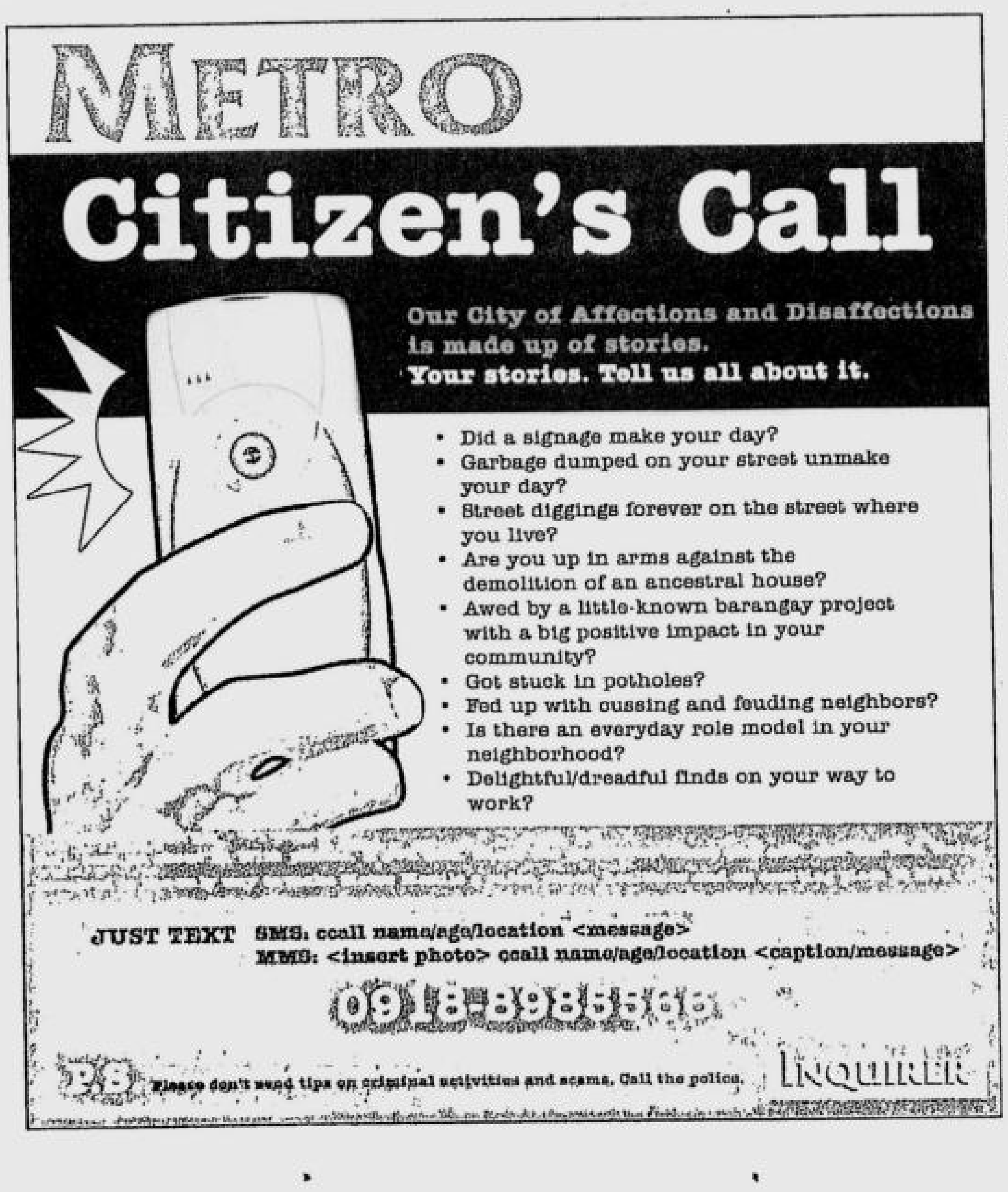
TWO PEOPLE were dead while two others were seriously injured when they were hit by a dump truck at 12:35 a.m. on C5 Road, Barangay Ugong in Pasig City yesterday. Eric Silvestre, 25, a resident of San Mateo, Rizal, and Armando Lipango, 25, a resident of Barangay Manggahan, Pasig City, were pronounced dead on arrival at Quirino Hospital. Christina Aguilino and Catherine Veronia, both Quezon City residents and employees of Ace Hardware at the SM Hypermart, were injured and taken to the hospital for treatment. A report from the Pasig City Traffic Unit said the truck driver, Cesar Albano, 45, was immediately arrested after the incident. The report said the driver was feeling sleepy and did not notice that his truck was veering to the right. The vehicle hit a metal post before plowing into the victims who were standing on the sidewalk. Albano is now detained at the Pasig City police station where he faces charges of reckless impudence resulting in homicide and multiple physical injuries.

Kristine L. Alave

Botched escape plan

THE POLICE said they would invite for questioning the employers of two housemaids who were seriously injured while trying to escape Sunday night. Evelyn Tayag, 30, and Marlyn Naasadera, 28, both stay-in helpers at 2233 Felix Huertas St. Sta. Cruz, suffered broken bones and head contusions after they fell onto the pavement when the blankets and curtains they had strung together broke, police said. They remain under observation at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center. The two maids accused their employers, Melissa and Jimmy Villanueva, of maltreating them, prompting them to try to escape from their employers' unit on the fifth floor.

Tina G. Santos



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INQUIRER

Like shooting the bearer of bad news

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THERE WAS NO NEED FOR ARMED Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon to deny a report supposedly made by a retired US Marine officer that American troops were conducting combat operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

The famous (or infamous) ex-Lt. Col. Oliver North never said US troops were fighting the Moro bandits, so why was there a need to issue a denial?

People who deny vehemently could be lying.

It was very clear what North said about what the US troops were doing: "The 'job' for less than 160 US Special Operations personnel here at what they call 'Advanced Operating Base 150' is to 'advise and assist' the Filipinos in their fight against the ASG.

"For these Americans, who are from the most elite units in the US military and used to doing the fighting themselves, this is a very tough mission."

This means that the Americans are not directly involved in combat.

The American troops find it "very tough" to just advise their Filipino counterparts because they're "used to doing the fighting themselves."

The Philippine Constitution prohibits foreign troops fighting on our soil.

Anyway, what's wrong if the Americans shoot back when they're being shot at by the Abu Sayyaf while they are with Filipino troops during a combat mission?

It would be stupid and cowardly for the US troops to just cringe in the bush while Filipino soldiers, who have been ambushed by the Moro bandits, are shooting back.

* * *

Officials of the Manila Water and Maynilad Water Services should be ashamed of themselves ganging up on a woman for saying water coming out of their faucets is filthy.

Pinky Tobiano, owner of Qualibet Testing Services, came under fire from the two water agencies after her firm found that Metro Manila residents could be bathing and drinking water contaminated with bacteria and fecal matter.

QualiBet is a private company that tests the quality of water, food and cosmetics.

Tobiano, a chemist, said tests were conducted for walk-in clients for three months.

The results of the study were scary. Bacteria and fecal matter in the Metro's water can cause gastrointestinal problems and skin diseases, if the results of the study were to be used as the basis.

The only way to purify water from the faucet is to boil it.

Instead of getting angry, Manila Water and Maynilad Water Services should take steps to clean up the water coming from their faucets.

If they want to belie the results of QualiBet study, they should hire another private testing firm to do a second study and show the results to the public.

The two water agencies should be ashamed of themselves for using a big TV network in hitting QualiBet and its owner.

Hey guys, are fair play and chivalry not in your vocabulary?

* * *

If President Macapagal-Arroyo does not revoke her order giving the Department of Justice complete control over the Bureau of Immigration, newly appointed Commissioner Marcelino Libanan might as well resign.

Libanan, a former Eastern Samar congressman and a lawyer, will become useless at the immigration bureau since he can't deport undesirable foreigners and reshuffle personnel.

The immigration bureau will then be run by advisers close to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

High-tech Aussie help led to JI leaders' arrest

JAKARTA—AUSTRALIAN POLICE tracking cell phone transmissions via US satellites were central to the arrests of two key Indonesian terror suspects—striking a major blow to the Southeast Asian militant network blamed for deadly suicide bombings.

Gen. Ansyaad Mbai, a top antiterror official, revealed rare details of the assistance given to Indonesian police, underscoring the important and sensitive behind-the-scenes role Western nations play in helping battle extremism in the world's most populous Muslim nation.

Also key to the June 9 capture of the Afghan-trained pair: information from suspects arrested in a raid on a militant stronghold earlier this year and a web of paid informers and former militants working to persuade hard-liners to change sides, Mbai and police officers said.

Indonesian police seized Zarkasih, whom police identified as the emir or head of Jemaah Islamiyah, and Abu Dujana, the group's military commander, who was shot in his leg while watching a vote count in village elections with his wife and child. Six other alleged members of the network were also picked up.

Jemaah Islamiyah members and their associates have been blamed for the 2002 bombings on the resort island of Bali; the 2003 and 2004 attacks on the J.W. Marriott Hotel and the Australian Embassy in Jakarta; and the 2005 triple suicide bombings on restaurants in Bali.

The bombings—some of which police say were carried out with funds and direction from al-Qaida—together killed more than 240 people, mostly Western tourists. The network has also been blamed for attacks in southern Philippines and failed plots in Singapore.

Despite a widely praised crackdown that has resulted in hundreds of arrests, police and former militants say the threat of another terror strike remains high because the most dangerous extremists have long stopped operating under JI's command.

"The more people who have learnt the skills of jihad, the harder things are to control," said Abu Rusdan, a militant cleric who authorities say lead Jemaah Islamiyah in 2003. "They feel obliged to carry out actions wherever they are, whether it be Malaysia, Singapore or Indonesia."

Details of foreign assistance in Indonesian police work are not normally made public out of fears doing so could trigger a backlash against the terror fight in the country, where suspicion of Washington and Canberra runs high.

Mbai, the top antiterror official at the Coordinating Ministry for Security and Political Affairs, said Australian Federal Police officials were based in Indonesia and tracing terrorists through their use of cell phone and e-mail. *AP*

TERRORIST suspect Abu Dujana (center), is escorted by plain-clothed police officers prior to a meeting with his wife for the first time since he was arrested, at a police camp in Yogyakarta, central Java, Indonesia, late Tuesday. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Missiles kill 32 militants

MIRANSHAH—A missile attack, possibly launched by US forces in Afghanistan, killed at least 32 pro-Taliban militants in a Pakistani tribal region near the border on Tuesday, Pakistani officials said. The missiles targeted a suspected training base in a village near the mountainous Datta Khel district, 60 km west of Miranshah, the main town in North Waziristan, the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to brief the media, told Reuters. Intelligence officials said some foreigners were among those killed, raising the possibility that al-Qaida fighters might have also been present. North Waziristan is a known refuge for remnants of Osama bin Laden's network. *Reuters*

Polish doctors protest

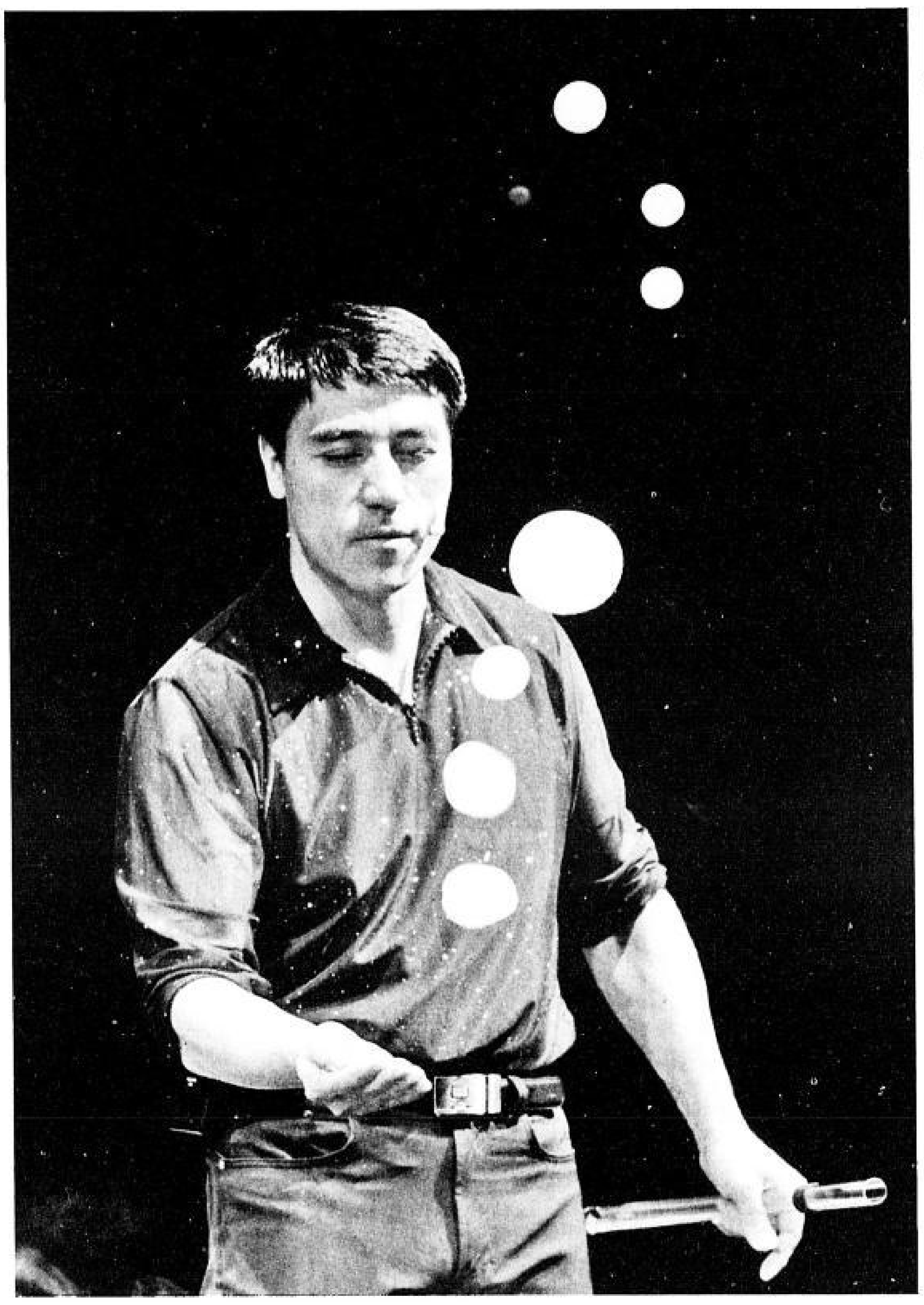
WARSAW—Several thousand Polish nurses and doctors marched through the capital on Tuesday, demanding pay hikes from the conservative government which is already confronting a month-old hospital strike. Police said that 4,500 people took part in the demonstration in Warsaw, braving driving rain as they paraded through the city center brandishing banners which read "Enough stalling, it's make your-mind-up time" and "We demand a decent wage!" Poland's state-employed medical workers are notoriously poorly-paid, like their counterparts in many former communist bloc countries. "I'm demonstrating because with 1,100 zlotys ($388) a month, I can't feed my children," said Anna Niewczas, a 35-year-old nurse from Radom, south of Warsaw. *AFP*

9 US firefighters dead

CHARLESTON, SC—Nine died as a fire in a furniture warehouse and showroom of Sofa Super Store became an inferno of exploding windows, columns of flame and steel beams twisted from 1,000-degree heat. All the victims were firefighters, a loss that Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. called "difficult to fathom or quantify." Excluding the Sept. 11 attacks, the structure fire was the nation's deadliest episode for firefighters in three decades. It occurred in a city that claims one of the country's oldest professional fire departments, a city where the fire chief, Rusty Thomas, joined the department when he was 18. "To lose nine is just a tragedy of immense proportions," Riley said. "To lose nine is just unbelievable." The firefighters were spread throughout the building when the roof collapsed, officials said. *NYT*

YouTube goes international

PARIS—The popular video-sharing website YouTube announced the launch here on Tuesday of international services in nine languages, in a fresh step by parent company Google to deepen its presence in Europe. Local language versions are now available in Britain, Brazil, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland and Spain, YouTube co-founder Steve Chen told a press conference. A German version should become operational soon. *AFP*



BUBBLE EXPERT
Bubble artist Fan Yang performs part of his off-Broadway "Gazillion Bubble Show" before attempting to break the Guinness World Record for the most bubble chambers in New York on June 19. The soap bubble structure he planned covers a vast surface area and features 13 rooms encapsulating 34 people. Each chamber has an island that can hold two people while the center bubble complex holds 10 people. AP

Thailand to hold elections on Nov. 25

BANGKOK—THAILAND WILL hold general elections on Nov. 25 in a bid to restore democracy in the kingdom following last year's coup, the chair of the country's election commission said on Wednesday.

The polls will be preceded by a referendum on Aug. 19 on the new constitution, which was drafted by a body appointed by the junta that seized power last September, commission chair Apichart Sukhagganond said.

"The election will be held on Nov. 25, which we have carefully considered," he told reporters after meeting army-installed Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont.

"According to the chair of the constitution drafting assembly, the final draft constitution will be ready by July 6, and the referendum will be held on Aug. 19," he added.

Surayud said earlier this week that the referendum and elections could be brought forward, noting that early polls were "a key concern of people outside Thailand." The international community has repeatedly urged the junta to bring forward elections, which were originally scheduled for December this year.

Exactly who will stand in the polls remains unclear after Thai Rak Thai (TRT), the popular party formed by ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, was dissolved three weeks ago over vote fraud violations.

The military-appointed Constitutional Tribunal also banned 111 senior TRT members from politics for five years, and the junta-backed parliament has not yet passed a new law which would allow members of TRT to register a new party. *AFP*

Early warning system useless vs 'stealth' tsunami

WASHINGTON—A SLOW-MOVING earthquake that could barely be felt despite its 7.8 magnitude caused a stealthy tsunami that killed more than 600 people in Indonesia last July, US-led researchers reported on Tuesday.

A survey of the area affected by the tsunami shows that early-warning systems and even common sense would not likely have helped prevent the tragedy, the Georgia Institute of Technology team reported.

"The general assumption was that if you were near the coast where the earthquake took place, you would feel it and be able to run to higher ground," said Hermann Fritz, who led the study published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters.

"This event caught people by surprise and showed that it's not always that simple." No sirens alerted south Java coastal communities after a quake struck around 180 km offshore in July 2006.

The resulting tsunami swept away unwary beachgoers.

The quake itself was little noticed, and researchers say quakes are sometimes not felt, depending on their depth and what kind of terrain the quake waves pass through.

In the 2006 quake, government ministers blamed a slow and bureaucratic process for initiating a tsunami alert.

Earthquakes are frequent in Indonesia, which lies in the so-called Pacific ring of fire.

An Indian Ocean tsunami triggered by a giant undersea earthquake off Indonesia's Aceh province in December 2004 killed tens of thousands of people across the region. *Reuters*

BBC man marks 100 days in Gaza captivity

GAZA CITY—AWARD-WINNING BBC journalist Alan Johnston marks 100 days in the captivity of Palestinian extremists in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday as colleagues hold vigils for his release around the world.

The 45-year-old British reporter's parents, Graham and Margaret, were to be joined by villagers at their home in Scotland to release 100 balloons at 2:15 p.m.—the exact time he was snatched at gunpoint on March 12.

Johnston's colleagues at the BBC were also to hold a vigil, with offices in Washington, New York, Brussels, Jerusalem and Kabul taking part to mark his unprecedented ordeal as a Western hostage in Gaza.

"On the 100th day, we are more steadfast in our support for Alan than ever and our thoughts are always with his family," said the director of BBC News, Helen Boaden, on the eve of the landmark date.

Johnston, the last Western journalist based permanently in Gaza when he was abducted, has been held for far longer than any other Western hostage in the territory.

There has been no word on his condition since the radical fringe group claiming his abduction released an undated video on June 1, showing a pale Johnston reassuring watchers that he had been well treated and well fed.

The Islamist movement Hamas, which has controlled Gaza since last week after routing Palestinian security forces in deadly battles, says it is working intensively to secure his release but his fate remains as uncertain as ever.

"When it comes to Alan Johnston we are multiplying efforts to secure his release, and we hope they will succeed and that he will be released in the coming days," senior Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya told a news conference.

"We want to reassure everyone that Hamas is working seriously for Johnston's release. Intense efforts are being made around the clock because we are determined to succeed," Hamas spokesperson Sami Abu Zuhri added. *AFP*

JOHNSTON AFP

Peru's ex-President Fujimori eyes senatorial post in Japan

FORMER Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori waves to reporters at the entrance to his rented house in Santiago, Chile, in this May 19, 2006 file photo. AP

LIMA—PERUVIAN FORMER President Alberto Fujimori, in Chile facing extradition to Peru on human rights violations charges, is considering a request to run for office in Japan, aides said on Tuesday.

Representatives of the People's New Party approached Fujimori at his Santiago residence, where he is held under house arrest, and urged him on Monday to run in July elections for the upper house of Japan's Diet.

Fujimori, president of Peru from 1990 to 2000, is a Peruvian of Japanese descent and is a Japanese citizen. He lived in exile in Tokyo for five years while he plotted a political comeback, and is technically eligible to run.

"Alberto Fujimori has reserved his final response, while considering what benefits his possible election as a senator in Japan could have for Peru," the ex-president's aides in Lima said in a statement on Tuesday.

Peruvian prosecutors however want Fujimori to face a series of charges that include ordering the murders of 25 people in 1991 and 1992, ordering the abduction and torture of opponents, and embezzling government funds.

Two weeks ago Chile's Supreme Court prosecutor recommended that the court accept Peru's request for Fujimori's extradition. The final ruling however was delayed as the Chilean judge handling the case went on sick leave.

Fujimori's potential candidacy in Japan "would in no way affect the process of extradition," said Chilean lawyer Carlos Castro, an expert in the laws involving repatriation.

"For the law, he is a Peruvian citizen with charges pending in Peru," said Castro, speaking in Santiago. Fujimori's Japanese nationality was not important to the case.

"In absolute terms it changes nothing in the nature of his case, and he is not now a senator in Japan," added Hugo Gutierrez, a Chilean human rights specialist.

He added that his status as Peru's ex-president gives Fujimori no special privileges in Chile.

However if Fujimori is elected as to parliament in Japan, that could affect his trial in Peru assuming the extradition is approved, the experts said.

"In Peru his status as a (Japanese) legislator could have political implications," said Gutierrez..

In Lima, political analyst Ernesto Velit said Peru could "find itself in a legal trap, despite its anxious wait for Fujimori's extradition. We will have to negotiate an exit or take the case up to the International Court in The Hague." Velit said he thought the Chilean Supreme Court would issue its ruling before Fujimori's possible election in Japan could complicate the case.

An agronomist by training and the son of Japanese immigrants to Peru, Fujimori was credited with reining in economic chaos and leftist insurgencies during his presidency. Critics however say that in the process he crushed civil liberties, rigged elections and abusing human rights. *AFP*

The WORLD

Truck bomb kills 87 in Baghdad

A MAN walks amid the rubble of the destroyed Shiite's al-Kholani mosque in Baghdad on June 20. REUTERS

BAGHDAD—A MASSIVE TRUCK BOMB EXPLODED NEAR A Shiite mosque in central Baghdad on Tuesday, killing at least 87 people in the deadliest single attack there in two months.

Tuesday's blast came just hours after 10,000 US and Iraqi troops launched a major air and ground assault on al-Qaida strongholds in the restive Diyala province, the biggest such operation ever launched in the area.

The explosion, the most lethal in Iraq since mid-April and the latest in a wave of tit-for-tat attacks against Sunni and Shiite mosques, spared the green dome of the Al-Kholani mosque but destroyed its main prayer hall.

Security officials said at least 87 people were killed and 242 others wounded.

Police and volunteers pulled burning bodies out of cars while others dug through the rubble to try to find survivors, according to an AFP correspondent at the scene, where the blast left a crater of six meters by three meters.

Groups of women wailed, while others chanted that the explosion was the work of those who blew up a Shiite shrine in the northern city of Samarra last Wednesday.

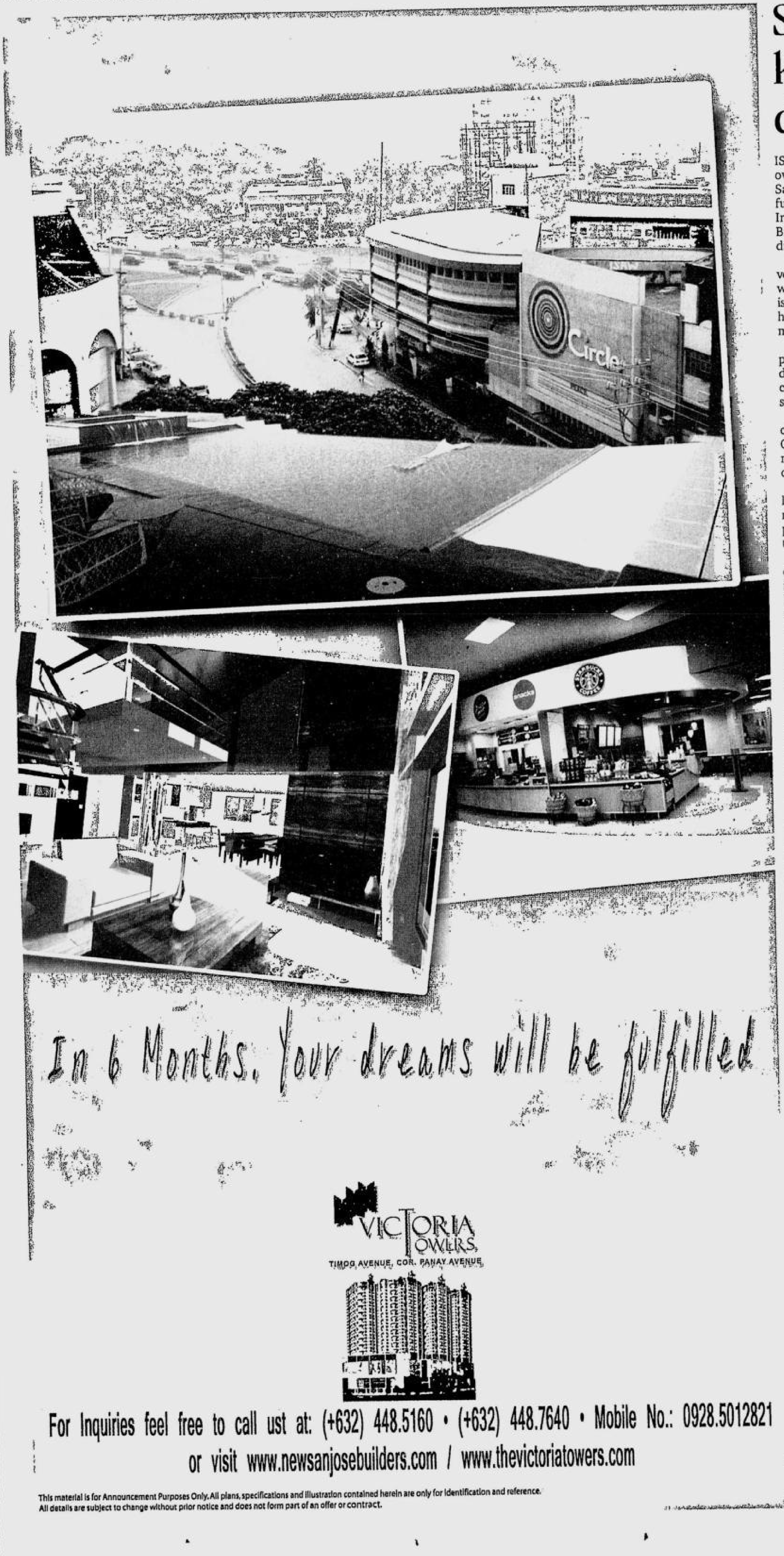
Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki condemned the bombing and called for national unity.

"Once again the groups of conspiracy, terror, and takfir (Sunni extremism) have violated the sanctity of houses of God and spilled the blood of innocent people," Maliki said in a statement.

The bombing "scarred the beautiful face of Baghdad by destroying the religious landmarks it has been known for over the centuries." The government has struggled to prevent an outbreak of sectarian killing following the bombing of the Samarra shrine last week, fearing a repeat of the bloodshed that followed a similar attack in February 2006.

Tuesday's bombing came just two days after the lifting of a city-wide curfew, and more than four months after the launch of a "surge" of thousands of US and Iraqi forces into the beleaguered capital.

Many of those forces have since been deployed to restive areas outside the capital such as the Diyala province, where US and Iraqi forces launched a full-fledged assault on Tuesday. *AFP*



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Salman Rushdie's knighthood triggers diplomatic furor

RUSHDIE AP

ISLAMABAD—CONTROVERSY over a knighthood for author Salman Rushdie escalated into a full-blown diplomatic row as Iran and Pakistan summoned Britain's ambassadors to protest, drawing a retort from London.

Iran summoned the British envoy to Tehran, Geoffrey Adams, who was told by the foreign ministry's director for Europe that the honor was a "provocative act," state media reported.

In Pakistan, where both houses of parliament called on Britain to withdraw the knighthood, Britain's high commissioner Robert Brinkley was also summoned to the foreign ministry.

Islamic hardliners in the eastern city of Lahore burned an effigy of Queen Elizabeth, while one Iranian newspaper branded her an "old crone."

Rushdie is accused by some Muslims of blaspheming Islam in his novel "The Satanic Verses," whose publication in 1988 triggered an international furor.

He has been living since then under the shadow of a death sentence imposed by Iran's late supreme leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini which has never been formally revoked.

Rushdie was awarded a knighthood last week for services to literature in Queen Elizabeth's birthday honors list.

Rushdie, who turned 60 Tuesday and has won several top literary awards, was put under police protection following the Satanic Verses flare-up. His exact whereabouts now are not known.

His knighthood means he can call himself Sir Salman.

The Iranian foreign ministry official, Ebrahim Rahimpour, told Adams that Britain's "insulting, suspicious and ill-considered act is an obvious sign of Islamophobia which has terribly hurt the feelings of 1.5 billion Muslims.

"The consequences of this provocation, which has angered Muslims, will be directed at the British queen and government."

Pakistan, for its part, said it "deplores and regrets the decision by the British government" which showed a "lack of sensitivity." Afghanistan's insurgent Taliban condemned Britain's action in a statement read to AFP over the telephone by spokesperson Yousuf Ahmadi.

"This is a clear enmity with Islam and Muslims. We ask Britain to take back what they have done and to apologize to Muslims," he said.

In London, Buckingham Palace declined comment, as did Rushdie's publisher Jonathan Cape, a division of Random House.

In Kuala Lumpur, supporters of Malaysia's hardline Islamic party protested outside the British embassy on Wednesday against the award of a knighthood to Rushdie.

Chanting "Destroy Salman Rushdie" and "Destroy Britain," some 30 members of the opposition Parti Islam se-Malaysia urged Britain to withdraw the honor or risk the consequences. *AFP with Reuters report*

Bush's budget chief quits

PORTMAN REUTERS

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush lost another key aide on Tuesday as in a surprise move his budget chief Rob Portman announced he was resigning in a new blow in the waning months of the US administration.

Portman's departure is the latest to roil the upper ranks of the Bush White House as the United States gears up for presidential elections in November 2008.

Portman, who is quitting after just over a year, comes only a few weeks after Dan Bartlett, one of the president's closest policy aides, said he was stepping down after almost 14 years at Bush's side.

Political analysts say it is not unusual for such top level officials to resign as an administration enters its final stretch.

But it is another blow for Bush, whose popularity is sagging due to the unpopular Iraq war, and who has seen a several key figures leave the White House.

Among those who have quit for various reasons are former defense secretary and loyal Bush ally, Donald Rumsfeld, who stepped down after the Democratic Party rode a wave of anger over Iraq to victory in congressional polls last year.

Former White House aide Lewis "Scooter" Libby was forced to leave the administration in 2005 amid a probe into a CIA leak case, and former national security staffer J.D. Crouch also left the administration recently.

Bush said on Tuesday he had nominated former congressman Jim Nussle as the new White House budget chief following Portman's resignation.

"I'm pleased to announce my nomination of Jim Nussle to serve as director of the Office of Management and Budget," Bush said.

The OMB chief's job, although relatively obscure, is critical to the running of the federal government as he is effectively one of the government's top book-keepers, responsible for balancing and streamlining the competing budget demands of vast government departments. *AFP*

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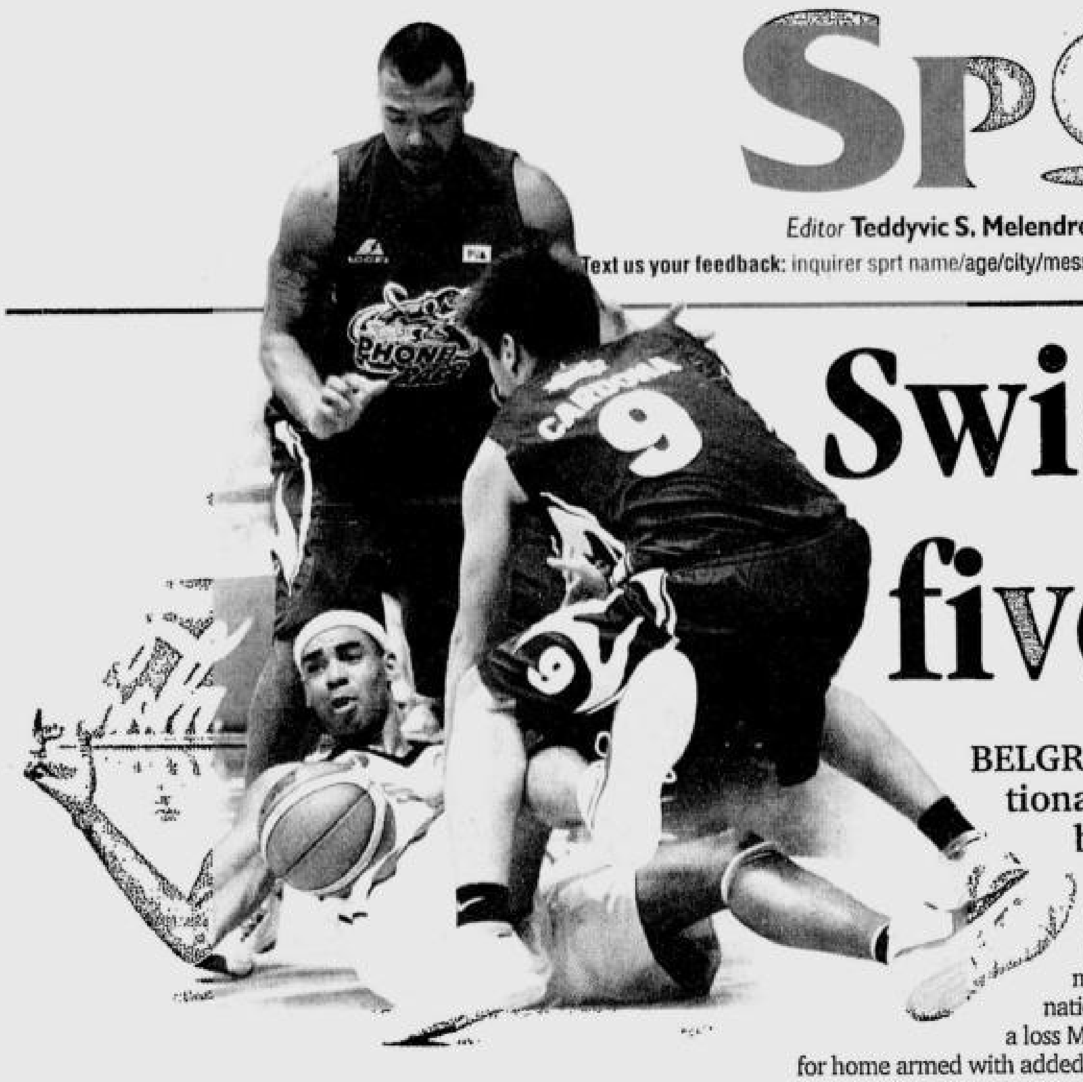
SSC tries to regroup vs UST Tigresses /A24



JAMES Penny, Red Bull's hardworking import, crashes to the floor as he is pressured by the defense of Talk 'N Text spitfire Mac Cardona (front) and Jay Washington at the start of the PBA Fiesta Cup semifinals. *Story on Late Sports, A16.* AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Swiss Lions send RP five home with loss

BELGRADE—COACH CHOT REYES SAID THE NAtionals were going to get beaten black and blue but learn something in the process.

The San Miguel-RP squad wrapped up its Serbian remedial class on international basketball with a loss Monday night but left for home armed with added knowledge it hopes to use as it guns for an Olympic berth next month.

Playing its fifth game in five days, the shorthanded Nationals went for another victory but fell short against the Swisslion Takovo Lions, 86-79, in a game played in Vrsac, a small town 80 kilometers northeast of Belgrade.

The RP scoreboard at the end of its tough Serbian tour was two wins and three losses, a decent performance considering that Chot had anticipated lopsided losses for his boys all the way.

Coming off a 90-minute bus ride and arriving at the arena barely 30 minutes before game time, the Nationals started sluggishly against the Lions and fell behind by 15 points at the half, 57-42.

But the Filipinos fought back like wounded tigers in the last two quarters despite playing with only nine players.

Top gun Danny Seigle, do-everything forward Tony dela Cruz and sweet-shooting Dondon Hontiveros missed the game due to a variety of ailments, allowing the Lions to take control early with a tall lineup made up of 6-3 point guard Milos Kasabasic, 6-5 shooting guard Vladimir Vlaskovic, 6-6 Nikolai Gacie, 6-9 power forward Danilo Mijanovic, and 6-10 center Dalibor Djapa.

Mijanovic, a strong left-handed inside player with a deadly 3-point touch, and Djapa hit six 3-pointers between them as each scored 16 points in the first half to lead the Swisslion charge.

"This was a great trip," said Mark Caguioa. "This is what basketball is all about. The NBA is part entertainment. Here, basketball is their life. I learned so much in our stay here."

"I think we really improved in this trip, both in our game, and in our conditioning," said Taulava. "We are now getting in Fiba shape, not PBA shape."

The scores:

SWISSLION TAKOVO 86—Mijanovic 26, Kasabasic 19, Djapa 16, Vlaskovic 14, Gacie 6, Mikic 5, Anastasov 0, Keri 0, Bugarin 0, Malovic 0.

SMC-PILIPINAS 79—Pennisi 15, Taulava 14, Helterbrand 14, Caguioa 12, De Ocampo 9, Ritualo 7, Raymundo 6, Norwood 2, Alapag 0.

Quarters: 21-28; 42-57; 59-65; 79-86

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Manila willing to demolish zoo for PBA venue

By Musong R. Castillo

THE AGE-OLD MANILA ZOO IS in danger of being extinct like some of the animals it houses if the Philippine Basketball Association and the city government will have their way.

Manila has joined the mix of places wanting to be the foundation of the first PBA Dome, according to board chair Ricky Vargas, who said that he gained some positive response from two Manila officials in a talk recently.

VARGAS

"It's a good location, the PBA Dome at the heart of the city," Vargas told a select group of scribes yesterday before the Talk 'N Text vs Red Bull game at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

The PBA chair said he had spoken to vice-mayor elect Isko Moreno and District 5 Rep. Amado Bagatsing, whom he said will support the idea of the PBA Dome being erected at the corner of Quirino and Adriatico streets.

Two other areas—one in Quezon City and the other in the reclaimed area along the Diosdado Macapagal Highway in Pasay—are being eyed by the board as possible sites.

"Actually, there are many options for the PBA to take," Vargas said. "But we (board) have to agree on the site first before we come out with the design. There are already bidders for the design."

One design submitted was from the same architect who built the Staples Center in Los Angeles, the home of the Lakers and the Clippers.

The idea of constructing a permanent PBA home has been there since late in the 1990s, when some members of the board suggested that it be done to save on expenses and make the league truly self-sufficient.

But it only gained ground this year when Vargas, who represents Talk 'N Text in the board, asked his Sta. Lucia Realty counterpart Buddy Encarnado, who chairs the site and design committee, to make a presentation of the project.

Vargas said he hopes to get the report from Encarnado before the board meets on June 28.

"We have Europeans willing to finance (the construction of the Dome)," Vargas said.

No favorites once POC pruning starts

By June Navarro

THERE WILL BE NO FAVORITES when the joint task force of the Philippine Olympic Committee and Philippine Sports Commission starts pruning down the roster of athletes to the Southeast Asian Games.

SEAG Task Force spokesperson Mark Joseph yesterday said the national sports associations would be furnished with the specific guidelines on the selection of athletes from the 721-strong national pool beginning next week.

"We will have strict requirements so nobody's really sure until the final entries are finished," said Joseph.

The swimming chief stressed that the candidate-athletes have to prove themselves in the specialized training centers supervised by the PSC and POC, including those who won gold medals in the previous staging of the games.

The 385 gold and silver medalists in the 2005 SEAG hosted by the country were included in the training roster but not all of them are expected to make it in the national contingent.

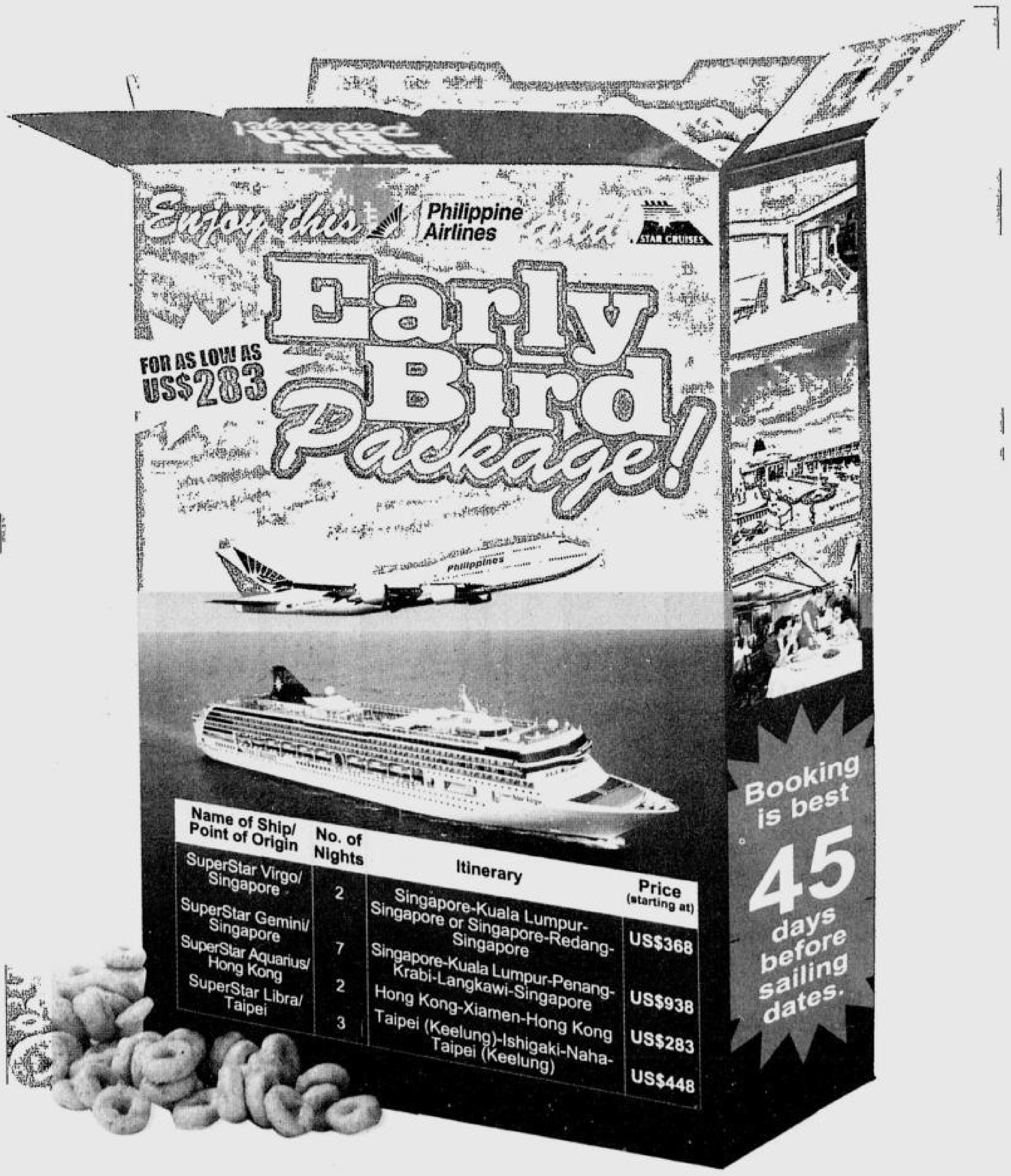
"Some of the candidates may even perform better than the medalists in the training camp and clinch a seat in the national team," said Joseph.

Aside from strictly monitoring the diet and progress of the athletes inside the training centers, the task force has employed highly skilled coaches for high-performance local and foreign training.

"If an athlete failed to train abroad, it doesn't mean he can't compete in the same level of the athletes who had foreign exposure," said Joseph.

"We have a lot of good coaches here capable of training the athletes like foreign coaches do," he added.

Tentatively set to open on the first week of July, the training centers are expected to squeeze out the best from the athletes before the task force submits the final lineup to the SEAG Federation Council on Oct. 8.



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Pascua, Revita cop golds

PATTAYA, THAILAND—HARIDAS PASCUA settled for a draw in his last-round match against Malaysia's Muhammad Izz Saifuddin, but it proved enough to give him his second gold medal in the 8th Asean + Age Group Championship at the Jomtien Thani hotel here.

Samantha Glo Revita duplicated Pascua's feat in clinching the gold in the girls' under-8, even as two more Filipino bidders settled for silvers, bringing the team's gold and silver medal haul to five golds and six silvers with the rapid event still to be played.

Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay, president of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines that supported the Filipino chessers' trip here, personally congratulated the winners and the rest of the delegation yesterday.

The 13-year-old Pascua of Mangatarem, Pangasinan, accepted the Malaysian's offer of a draw after giving up a pawn in the middle game to raise his total to 8.5 points out of a possible nine.

Pascua, who thanked Mangatarem Mayor Ramil Ventenilla for supporting him, will be gunning for his third gold medal in the rapid event along with 26 other Filipino players.

The seven-year-old Revita, also a Pangasinense from Rosales, upset top seed Dharsha Raja Jawahar of Indonesia in 40 moves of a Slav to clinch the gold.

But her teammate, Antoinette Marie San Diego, fell against Pham Thanhh Phuong Thao of Vietnam to settle for a bronze medal.

Girls' under-12 bet Brena Mae Membrere and boys' Under-10 bidder Jerad Docena both ended up with the silver medal.

Paz bags archery GP overall crown

CHINESE TAIPEI—BRANDISHING her usual form, Amaya Paz bagged the overall gold medal recently in the women's compound division in the second leg of the 2007 Asian Archery Grand Prix.

The country's leading lady archer capped her stint in the event by edging out Tinbua Narizara of Thailand, 112-108.

PAZ: Four-peat

This is the fourth gold medal for the senior psychology student of the University of the Philippines. Paz won the 2nd and 3rd legs of the 2006 Tour in Malaysia and Myan Mar, respectively, and the overall Southeast Asian Championship crown.

She bagged the first leg championship held in Thailand and her latest feat is expected to improve her No. 14 world ranking.

Paz, whose stint here is backed by Accel and China Trust, is expected to lead the RP charge in the coming Southeast Asian Games in Thailand. And judging by the showing of the Filipinos in this event, the country stands a good chance for a strong showing in the archery event.

In the men's compound division, the country's No. 1 archer, Earl Benjamin Yap was not so lucky. But despite settling for fifth place after a quarterfinal loss to hometown bet Chih Hao-wang, 115-114, Yap still had a strong showing especially in the three previous legs which he ruled.

Other members of the men's team are Enrique Cojuangco Jr (12th place), Rosendo Sombreo (17th) and Timoteo Bismark (22nd).

Tanpinco, Dela Paz gain in Public Links

LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY—ANYA Tanpinco and Marie Dhel Dela Paz of the Philippines advanced to the match play phase of the US Women's Amateur Public Links Tuesday.

The two finished tied with five others at 152, one stroke off the 64-player match play cut, after two days of stroke play at the 6,094-yard, par-72 Kearney Hill Golf Links.

Tanpinco, who turns 24 on Sunday and is the oldest among the survivors, had rounds of 75-77 while Dela Paz shot 77-75.

Tiffany Lua shot a 2-under-par 70 for a 7-under 137 total to win the stroke-play title by one stroke over reigning US Women's Amateur champion Kimberly Kim, who had a 69.

"I think it's an honor to be a medalist," said Lua, competing in her seventh USGA championship. "(But) tomorrow, everything is gone. I am pretty much starting over all over again. Tomorrow is when the real fun begins."

Korean Wonjoo Choi had a 71 and left-hander and Marci Turner, of Tompkinsville, Ky., shot 70 to tie for third at 141.

Eight players finished at 9-over 153 and will return Wednesday morning to play for the final five spots of the 64-player match-play draw.

The youngest to make match play was 12-year-old Annie Park of Levittown, NY. Korean-born Julie Yang, 11, of Phoenix, the youngest in the field, missed by one stroke.

Play was suspended twice for a total of 122 minutes in the afternoon due to thunderstorms. *AP*

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BOHOL WISDOM SCHOOL CPG North Avenue, Tagbilaran City	Xiaofang Le	Teacher
MISAMIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL Lam-An, Ozamis City 7200 P.O. Box 1055	Hailin Huang	Teacher
BOHOL WISDOM SCHOOL CPG North Ave., Tagbilaran City	Yixuan Yang	Teacher
BOHOL WISDOM SCHOOL CPG North Ave., Tagbilaran City	Zhige Wang	Teacher
BOHOL WISDOM SCHOOL CPG North Ave., Tagbilaran City	Xudong Gao	Teacher
MISAMIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL Lam-An, Ozamis City	Wanyu Zheng	Teacher
MISAMIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL Lam-An, Ozamis City	Lingyan Tu	Teacher
MISAMIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL Lam-An, Ozamis City	Ning Xue	Teacher
SURIGAO SUN YAT SEN ELEM. SCHOOL Kaimo St., Surigao City	Huiyan Wang	Teacher
LANAO CHUNG HUA SCHOOL Pala-O Iligan City 9200 Lanao del Norte	Shaojuan Chen	Teacher
LANAO CHUNG HUA SCHOOL Pala-O Iligan City 9200 Lanao del Norte	Yaling Dong	Teacher
PHILIPPINE TONG HO INSTITUTE Merchan St., Lucena City	Mengli Ruan	Teacher
PHILIPPINE TONG HO INSTITUTE Merchan St., Lucena City	Xiuqin Deng	Teacher
PHILIPPINE TONG HO INSTITUTE Merchan St., Lucena City	Huizhen Lai	Teacher
PHILIPPINE TONG HO INSTITUTE Merchan St., Lucena City	Xiufen Chen	Teacher

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 339-2013 & 303-5920.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI – June 21, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
Tel. # 088-221-4820 & Telefax # 088-221-2537
E-mail Add: buk_provl_bac@yahoo.com.ph
OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR
Bids and Awards Committee

Standard Form Number 03
Revised on July 28, 2004
Contract Reference
759-700-002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF BUKIDNON**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to re-bid for the hereunder projects:

NAME OF THE PROJECT	**Project I – Drugs and Medicines** **Project II – Medical, Laboratory Supplies and Reagents**
LOCATION	**Provincial General Services Office**
BRIEF DESCRIPTION	**For the use of the seven (7) Bukidnon Provincial Hospitals and twenty two (22) Provincial Health Stations.**
Approved Budget for the contract	**Project I – P23,157,408.67** **Project II – P14,073,086.81**
DELIVERY PERIOD	**15 calendar days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed**
PLACE OF DELIVERY	**Provincial General Services Office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City**

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Advertisement	June 21, 2007
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	June 22, 2007
3. Pre-bid Conference	June 22, 2007
4. Application for Eligibility	June 25, 2007
5. Opening of Bids	July 04, 2007 at 10:00 A.M.
Deadline for the submission of Bid documents	July 04, 2007 not later than 9:00 A.M.

Bid Documents will be available only to Prospective Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,000.00 for Project I and P1,500.00 for Project II, at the Provincial Treasurer's Office.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the BAC office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security equal to 1% for Cash, Certified check, Cashier's check, Manager's Check. Bank draft or Irrevocable letter of credit, 1.5% for Bank guarantee, 2.5%for Surety bond of the Approved Budget for the Contract as advertised. Late Bids shall nio be accepted

The Province of Bukidnon reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
Prov'l Admin/BAC Chairman

(PDI–June 21, 2007)

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY WATER DISTRICT
263 Rizal Avenue, Puerto Princesa City
Tel. Nos. 433-2408, 433-5032, 433-6802
Fax No. (48) 433-6803

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Puerto Princesa City Water District through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Lot	Items	ABC		Cost of Bid Documents	
I	pipes, fittings and warning tape	Php	2,551,901.00	Php	2,500.00
II	C.I. fittings and fire hydrants	Php	1,717,625.00	Php	2,000.00
III	water meters (1/2")	Php	850,000.00	Php	1,000.00
IV	water meters (2" & 4")	Php	320,000.00	Php	500.00
V	angle valve	Php	1,095,000.00	Php	1,000.00
VI	pressure reducing valve	Php	413,600.00	Php	500.00
	TOTAL	Php	6,948,126.00	Php	7,500.00

Location : Puerto Princesa City Water District Stockyard, Sta. Monica, PPC
Delivery Period : Twenty (20) calendar days from the receipt of the Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years withi an amount of at least fifty percent (50%) of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	June 15, 2007 – July 3, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	June 26, 2007 1:30 P.M., PPCWD GM's Room
3. Deadline for Submission of Bids	July 10, 2007, 1:30 P.M., PPCWD GM's Room
4. Opening of Bids	July 10, 2007, 1:30 P.M., PPCWD GM's Room

The Puerto Princesa City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ENGR. VICENTE D. ABREA
PPCWD BAC Chairman

(PDI – June 14 & 21, 2007)

SULTAN KUDARAT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
City of Tacurong
Tels: 064-200-3155, 064-477-0372/0326; Fax: 064-200-3156

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SUKELCO) has made available from its reinvestment fund an amount for the procurement of Meter Reading Gadget for the year 2007.

The Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc. now invites Sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the following:

1. Supply and Delivery of 35 units PALM TUNGSTEN E2 w/ complete accessories w/ 256mb SD memory.
2. Supply and Delivery of 35 units Datecs PP55 Printer for Palm Tungsten E2 w/ cradle for card Palm Tungsten E2.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information at the office of Ms. Guia R. Victorio, BAC Chairperson.

Sealed envelopes containing the financial and Technical Proposals marked as such will be received by the BAC at the Board Room on or before 10:00 a.m. on July 09, 2007 at which time and place the technical proposals will be opened and evaluated. The financial proposals of bidders found eligible to bid will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or Bidder's representative who choose to attend, otherwise, they will be returned unopened to ineligible bidders.

A pre-bid conference will be held on July 2, 2007 at the Board Room.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a bid security, in cash or cashier's check, in the amount equivalent to 2-1/2% of the amount of bid. This bid security shall be valid for at least 150 days, starting from the date of bid opening.

The Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc. hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids without disclosing any reason, to waive any minor defects of infirmities therein and to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the Cooperative.

(Sgd.) **GUIA R. VICTORIO**
BAC Chairman

Noted By:

(Sgd.) **DEMETRIO O. JEREZ, PEE**
General Manager

(PDI–June 19 & 21, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Education
Region IVB-MIMAROPA
Division of Oriental Mindoro
Telefax No. (043) 286-7091
E-mail Address. deped_orientalmindoro@yahoo.com

ANNEX – A

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **Department of Education**, Division of Oriental Mindoro through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for:

NAME OF THE PROJECT	**Supply and Delivery of Elementary Tables and Chairs, Elementary Armchairs, and Teachers Tables and Chairs**
ABC & FUNDING SOURCE	: **Funding Source is the Government of the Philippines CY 2006 GAA (75% Allocation of the DepEd Desk/Armchair Project)**
CONTRACT DURATION	: **One Hundred Twenty (120) Calendar Days**
DELIVERY SITES	: **"Door-to-door" delivery to various recipient schools (See Schedule of Requirements of the Bidding Documents)**

LOT	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	ABC (Php)
A	Elementary Table and Chairs (all wood)	1,654 sets	Php3,308,000.00
	Teachers Table and Chair (all wood)	65 sets	299,000.00
B	Elementary Armchairs for Grades 5 to 6 (all wood)	1,695 pcs.	1,322,100.00
	Teachers Table and Chair (all wood)	33 sets	151,800.00
	TOTAL		Php 5,080,900.00

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Date and Time	Venue
1. Availability of Bidding Documents	June 18-26, 2007 8:00 AM-5:00 PM	BAC Secretariat Office
2. Pre-bid Conference	June 27, 2007 10:00 A.M.	Division Office Conference Room
3. Receipt and Opening of Bids	July 10, 2007 10:00 A.M.	Division Office Conference Room

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat Office, DepED Division of Oriental Mindoro starting on **June 18 to 26, 2007** upon payment of non-refundable amount of **Two Thousand (Php 2,000.00) Pesos Only.**

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at **http//www.deped.gov.ph** or **www.philgeps.net** or call DepED-Division of Oriental Mindoro at Telephone No. **(043) 286-7091** and **Fax No. 043-286-7091**.

The Department of Education reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders

(Sgd.) **WILFREDO E. CABRAL**
Asst. Schools Division Superintendent
BAC Chairperson

(PDI–June 21, 2007)

Paragua 2nd in US

MARK PARAGUA

FILIPINO GRANDMASTER MARK Paragua finished second in the recent 12th annual Bradley Open Chess Championship at the Hardford/Windsor Marriott Hotel in Windsor, Connecticut.

The 23-year-old Paragua, the country's No. 3 player with an Elo rating of 2532, scored 4.0 points on three wins and two draws and wound up behind American GM Alexander Ivanov with 4.5 points.

Paragua, the 2003 Vietnam Southeast Asian Games' most bemedalled athlete with three golds, beat US masters Dale Eugene Sharp, Max Enkin and Richard Bauer in rounds 1, 2 and 4, respectively. He drew with Ivanov (Elo 2565) in the third round.

Paragua, Michael Adarlo and younger brother Jan Vincent are set to play in the 35th World Open Chess Championships on June 28 to July 4 at the Valley Forge Radisson and Convention Plaza, King of Prussia in Pennsylvania.

Their campaign is being supported by sportsman Jeremy Regino and Dickies Philippines VP president Dody T. Arcaya. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

GenSan stuns Tagaytay-Spring

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—MP Pacman-GenSan shocked Tagyatay-Spring Cooking Oil, 69-60, in the 2007 Spring-NBC National Cup basketball tournament Tuesday at the packed Lagao gym here.

Point guard Louie Medalla scored a conference high 20 points, grabbed four rebounds and issued three assists to lead the Warriors of boxing icon Manny Pacquiao to their eighth win in 13 games.

Tagaytay-Spring's third loss in 10 outings dropped it to a second-place tie with defending champion Ozamiz. GenSan controlled the game from the start, but the Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and league EVP Mayor Bambol Tolentino found their mark in the third to take a 48-47 lead into the payoff canto.

Medalla and company regained their touch, however, and charged ahead for good early in the fourth canto.

The community-based tourney is being supported by Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Yahoo Phils., San Miguel Beer, Caltex, Sun Cellular, Firefly Lightings, Trans Asia Shipping Lines, Molten, Nature's Spring, BasketballTV and Viva Prime Channel.

The scores:

GENSAN 69—Medalla 20, Berami 13, Ramos 11, Farochillen 9, Coronado 5, Locsin 4, Celiz 3, Mejorada 2, Denisson 2, Recustodio 0, Tadena 0.

TAGAYTAY 60—Rodriguez 15, Legaspi 10, Reyes 7, Tajonera 6, Epondulan 5, Yambao 5, De Castro 4, Victolero 2, Bolocon 2, Mallari 2, Munoz 2, Cuenca 0.

Quarters: 15-12, 35-31, 47-48, 69-60

Lascuña surges ahead with 67

ANTONIO Lascuna grabs the lead after two rounds by one stroke over Mars Pucay yesterday. ROMY HOMILLADA

By Musong R. Castillo

LIPA CITY—ANTONIO LASCUÑA, ON TARget after missing the first green for bogey, assembled a five-under-par 67 yesterday to seize a one-stroke lead over Mars Pucay after 36 holes of the PGAP Pantechs Invitational presented by Jun Bustamante.

The 38-year-old, whose list of victories include the inaugural The Country Club Invitational, bogeyed the easy first hole but rebounded to fire a 32 coming home and post a 135 total in the P1.32 million event.

Pucay settled for a second straight 68 also after a 32 on his homeward trip as the event shaped up into a two-cornered fight with their two co-leaders after the opening-round lead losing steam.

Former Philippine Open winner Cassius Casas was good for a 70, trailing Lascuna by three, while Erwin Estrera, who also had a 68 on Tuesday, scored a 71 to fall another stroke back.

Asian Tour 2006 Rookie of the Year Juvic Pagunsan turned in a 69 and was at 140 heading into the final two rounds at the Malarayat's Mount Malipunyo and Makulot nines.

Artemio Murakami, the youngest winner of the RP Amateurs, matched par 72 and dropped out of the Top 10 with his 142 total.

Three-peat-seeking Elmer Salvador, who won the Splendido and Royal Northwoods legs of this circuit being backed by JP Golf Korea, cracked par for the first time, firing a 69 which still left him six shots off.

Salvador was tied with Rey Pagunsan (72), Orlan Sumcad (72) and Marvin Dumandan (69).

Joenard Rates shot a 67 and moved into contention for the P300,000 first prize, tying Estrera in fourth like Richard Sinfuego, who followed up an opening day 70 with a 69.

Abdon pulls away by 3 strokes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JOHN KIER ABDON SUSTAINED HIS hot start with a three-under-par 69 to boost his lead to three strokes after yesterday's second round of the 6th Asean Schools jungolf championship at the Manila Southwoods in Carmona, Cavite.

Counting his sensational 66 in the opening round, Abdon pulled away from Malaysia's Nicholas Fung Chee Yung (70) in the individual race with a 135 total while pulling the Filipinos to fourth place in team competition.

With Joey Huerva IV firing a 68, the Filipino boys improved a notch from fifth with a 596 total, 14 strokes behind the leading Thais.

Tinnaphop Chawatin boosted the defending champion's stock with a 68 as the Thais overtook first-day leader Singapore, which had a 585 total. Malaysia kept third place at 587.

But the RP girls slid from third to fifth with Regina de Guzman's 75 proving the best score for the home team that now trails leading Singapore by 23 strokes with a 462 total.

Singapore, with Kristle Koh Pei Lin shooting a 72, was five shots clear of Thailand in the girls' team competition with a 444 total. Indonesia (455) and Malaysia (457) stood third and fourth, respectively.

Huerva recovered from his 75 in the first round to place third in the individual derby with a 143 total but Jan Michael Karel Yee could only come up with a 75, while Jonar Austria carded an 80.

"I still had a good game, but not as good as my opening round," said Abdon, a senior from San Beda. "I know my way around this course and I was able to execute my strategy which is to birdie all par-5s."

The 16-year-old Abdon, who had a 65 during Monday's practice round, actually birdied only two par-5s—the 14th and 17th—but he also gained a stroke on No. 1 and No. 13

A bogey on the 11th was the only blemish on the card of Anton, who last March scored a hole-in-one on a par-4 at Mt. Malarayat and is set to compete in the World Jungolf championships next month.

Thai Chirapat Jao-Javanil and Singapore's Stephanie Loi Shu-Ning shared the girls' individual lead at 145. Singapore's Lin (146) and Koh Sock Hwee (149) crowded the leaderboard with a 74 and 73, respectively.

SPORTSWATCH

Padyak Pinoy winners get rewards

VICTOR ESPIRITU AND HIS WOW MAGIC SING GOT THE LION'S SHARE OF nearly P2.8 million in total cash prizes as Dynamic Outsource Solutions Inc. (Dos-1) held the 2007 Padyak Pinoy Summer Showdown awarding ceremonies at the Multi-Purpose Theater of the Amoranto Sports Complex in Quezon City yesterday. Dos-1 president Gary Cayton led the elaborate rites and was joined by PhilCycling president and Air21 chair Bert Lina, Air21 president Lito Alvarez, Tanduay top brass Wilson Young, Andres Co and Larry Li and Andres Sanchez, Ma. Christina Llamo and Daniel del Rosario of G2K Corporation (Wow Magic Sing). Espiritu is the individual overall champion of the 10-stage Padyak Pinoy Summer Showdown staged May 17 to 27, while his Wow Magic Sing is the team overall titlist. Espiritu received P50,000 while his team got P50,000. A total of 86 riders took part in the Padyak Pinoy. Espiritu also copped the King of the Mountain title.

DRAGON BOAT WINNERS: Quezon Majority Floor Leader Ariel Inton (third from right) with the winning team of Tiger-Dragon Rowing Crew Philippines in the recent Dragon Boat Federation Inter-Collegiate Race Championships 2006-2007.

Makati cockfest slated Saturday

A SPECIAL 4-COCK DERBY WILL BE PRESENTED BY THE WTJ SPORTS AND amusement Corp. and Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) on June 23 and 27 at the Makati Coliseum. According to promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTJ, the cockfests are not part of the PCAP Cocker of the Year battle. All entries must be submitted tomorrow from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. PCAP members and guest participants may call 896 -3545 and 895-6475 (Joan or Stephanie) for details. Meanwhile, the team of Biboy Enriquez, Madlambayan Brothers and Jet Fernando (Firebird Jimafer BJ) and Efren Canlas (Bacolor Gold) topped the 12th leg of the PCAP 5-cock series Monday night after posting five wins each. Enriquez and company, who fielded Kelso Sweater bullstags, took the overall leadership in the PCAP Cocker of the Year race from erstwhile leaders Sandy Sur and Edwin Yap (Michael One).

P300,000 at stake in SJC Fastest Win

SMALL-TIME COCKERS AND HACKFIGHT ENTHUSIASTS OF METRO MANILA plunge into action tomorrow for the San Juan Coliseum's "Fastest Win One-Cock Ulutan." The SJC management stakes a guaranteed prize of P300,000 for an entry fee of P1,100. The fastest win champion will receive P120,000; second, P50,000; third, P20,000; fourth, P15,000; sixth to 10th placers, P5,000; 11th to 15th placers, P4,000. Meanwhile, a special 4-cock derby also unfolds at SJC on June 25 with Maan and Maricar Gonzaga as hosts. Entry fee is P11,000. For reservation of cockhouses, call 725-5369 and 0917-8041691.

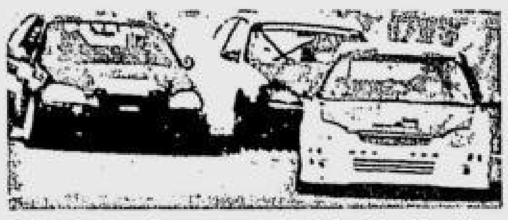
Coseteng boosts title bid

SUBIC—DEFENDING CHAMPION JODY Coseteng of San Mig Coffee firmed up his bid for an 11th straight crown following his third consecutive sweep recently in the 2007 Philippine Touring Car Championship Series at the Subic International Raceway here.

Starting second on the grid following a minor lapse in the qualifying round, Coseteng quickly grabbed the lead from the young Uly Maningding of Explorer Motorsports and held it till the end.

Maningding, running smoothly throughout the 15-lap race, emerged runner-up while Louis Ramirez claimed third place in Round 5 after his brother and Petron-SRA teammate Kookie Ramirez suffered from a troubled start.

Kookie Ramirez had little time to prepare and the bad car set-up got him down to ninth on the grid. He only managed to finish sixth.



ULY Maningding gets sandwiched by Kookie Ramirez (left) and Dennis Uy, causing him to slam into the tire barrier.

Kookie redeemed himself in the afternoon race where he wound up second.

Maningding, who was running second early in the race, skidded off the track and crashed into the tire barrier after being sandwiched by Kookie Ramirez and Dennis Uy of Valvoline-Velocity Motors on the seventh lap.

Young stars challenge Alcano

DAVID

BUSTAMANTE

RISING STARS JEFfrey de Luna, Joven Bustamante and Renemar David take a crack at double world champion Ronnie Alcano when the first poker pool event dubbed as "Sargo's Golden Classics" gets under way at the Bugsy's Lair Billiards hall in Timog, Quezon City.

"Jeff (De Luna), Revo (David) and I are all thinking of putting one over Ronnie (Alcano)," said the 28-year-old Bustamante. "It really feels good to beat a world champion."

Bustamante, the 2007 Fujairah World 8-ball semifinalist, owns a 9-3 victory over Alcano in the 2nd BSCP National Pool Championships early this year.

Alcano said he's bent on exacting revenge over Joven, a distant relative of former world No. 1 Django Bustamante. *Marlon Bernardino*

TENNIS CLINIC: Participants and instructors in the recent Philippine Airlines tennis clinic conducted by the Philippine Tennis Association (Philta) gather at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Thirty-four junior players, including RP No. 1 18-and-under campaigners Kyle Joshua Dandan and Denise Dy, participated in the event supervised by national coaches Johnny Jose, Chris Cuarto, Tom Falcis and Roland Kraut.

Archers chief backs runners

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

A VETERAN colleague texted us to ask if Terry Capistrano is still the team manager of the De La Salle Green Archers men's basketball team since he had supported two La Salle alumni national tracksters in their six-month training in Southern California.

"Yes, I am still manager of the La Salle basketball team but I am just helping out a few of our national athletes for love of athletics and the country," said Capistrano in a text message recently after reading about my confinement at St. Luke's hospital.

Capistrano has been making his low key presence in athletics by supporting Ralph Soguilon and Sheena Atilano, who returned to the country last May 31.

Soguilon set new national records in the 100 and 200 meters in the US while Atilano achieved a personal best of 13.71 seconds in the 100m hurdles, surpassing her personal best of 14.46 seconds.

National coach Jojo Posadas, husband of Elma Muros, who owns the national hurdles mark of 13.66, told another colleague that if there is anyone who can break the record, it is Atilano, who marked her 26th birthday last June 14.

"She has the skills and is a fighter," said Posadas.

If other people in the mold of Capistrano had come earlier, Atilano and Soguilon would have long blossomed into track and field stars.

Atilano ran only 14 seconds in the 100 hurdles Tuesday night in the Bangkok Asian athletics grand prix. It was a far cry from her US marks but the event website said the entries ran into a strong headwind.

* * *

It was the first time in more than 10 years that Alaska team owner Fred Uytengsu threw a party for the media and I missed it. The last time I remember jamming with Fred and his trusted lieutenant, Joaqui Trillo, was at Bobong Velez' Faces Disco, located then at the entrance of the San Lorenzo Village. Joaqui at that time was manager of the disco. That must really be a long time because I don't remember any of the new breed of writers being with us then, only the old ones.

Tessa Jasminez ought to remember those affairs but colleagues Tito Talao and Nelson Beltran, definitely no rookie writers, don't. Nelson said he remembers a get-together with Alaska years ago at the Hotel La Corona at the time of Kume Jun Bernardino.

Bobong confirmed that the Faces era, famous for its "Scorpio Nights," lasted two decades. Tim Cone wasn't even the coach of Alaska then. Twenty years is a long time. Fred Uytengsu was only in his mid-20's then. Now he's 45. Incidentally, a PAL purser who visited me in the hospital said he was in the same flight with Fred from Hawaii to Manila. Fred had participated in the "Ironman Triathlon," just as he does every year. Fred had proudly announced that he was a finisher of the prestigious international event.

Two decades is really a long time. Was it the same Fred Uytengsu the press boys had dinner and drinks with at the Kamayan last Thursday night? A most gracious, solicitous host, down to earth, cowboy and funny? He was said to be even more charming than the man they call El Guapito then and even drank a few beers with the boys. He made everyone feel at home. Was this hard-to-please bunch all had fun last Thursday night? Wish I was there.

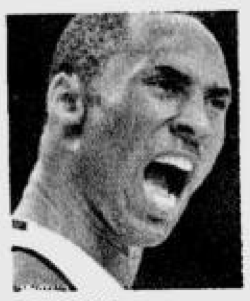
* * *

Calling all UP alumni. A dinner-fundraiser for the benefit of The University of the Philippines Fighting Maroons basketball team dubbed "Maroon Pride" will be held on June 30, 6 p.m. at the Bahay Alumni inside the UP Diliman. Attire is strictly maroon and price per plate is P3,000. Interested parties may call Romy Nones at 4211193 to 95.

SPORTS

Kobe still wants out

LA star caught on video denouncing teammate



BRYANT REUTERS

LOS ANGELES—Intentional or not, Kobe Bryant seems to be doing everything he can to pressure the Los Angeles Lakers into trading him.

So far, it doesn't appear to be working.

The latest twist in the Bryant saga involves an amateur video of the nine-time NBA All-Star denouncing general manager Mitch Kupchak and teammate Andrew Bynum.

Lakers spokesman John Black said the team was contacted about the video before Bryant first requested to be traded on May 30.

"It doesn't change our stance at all," Black said a day after saying essentially the same thing—that the team has no plans to trade the two-time defending NBA scoring champion.

"These people called us about a month ago, they told us they wanted to sell it, we told them we had no interest in buying it," Black said. "That's the end of the story. There's been no further contact between them and us."

A spokesman for the men trying to peddle the video to the media told the New York Times they were talking with Bryant when one decided to take a photograph and a video, but they didn't believe Bryant was aware they were filming.

The Lakers passed up a possible opportunity to acquire star guard Jason Kidd from the New Jersey Nets at the trade deadline in February because they didn't want to part with 19-year-old Bynum, who was taken with the 10th overall pick in the draft two years ago.

"Are you kidding me?" Bryant says in the video before using several profanities in adding that the Lakers should "ship out" Bynum.

Bryant also spoke in negative tones about Kupchak. Bryant called the Lakers' front office "a mess" in a radio interview the day before first making public his desire to be traded.

The Times said the video's owners turned down an offer from a Lakers fan to buy it. Instead, the newspaper said, they plan to make it public by the end of the week if enough money can be raised through web donations, then charge $1.99 through their site. *AP*

SSC tries to regroup against UST Tigresses

SAN SEBASTIAN, ITS SIX-GAME winning streak snapped last Tuesday, goes for at least a tie for a finals berth when it battles University of Santo Tomas today in the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball tournament at The Arena in San Juan City.

A win by the Lady Stags, their eighth, would put them beyond reach of the idle defending champion De La Salle University Lady Archers, who can only amass seven victories at the most.

La Salle stopped SSC's win run two days ago, 25-17, 20-25, 25-21, 24-26, 15-13.

Second-running Lyceum has an easier assignment against Ateneo in the 2 p.m. opener where a win would peg their slate at 7-2, enough to overtake SSC in case it loses to UST.

STANDINGS	W	L
SSC	7	2
Lyceum	6	2
UST	5	3
La Salle	5	4
Ateneo	3	6

GAMES TODAY
(*The Arena*)
2 p.m.—Lyceum vs Ateneo
4 p.m.—Santo Tomas vs San Sebastian

Ateneo is out of the finals race after absorbing its fifth straight loss.

SSC's guest Thai player Jaroensri Bualee paces the league in scoring with 235 points in nine matches and also tops the attack department with a 38.92 percent success average.

During their June 5 elimination-round meeting which SSC won, 26-24, 25-14, 17-25, 25-21, Bualee escaped with a game-high 22 points.

The Tigresses will rely anew on veterans and National team members Venus Bernal and Mary Jean Balse, no. 3 and 4, respectively, in scoring with 164 and 130 points, and former Adamson guest player Suzanne Roces. *Romina S. Austria*

KARLA Bello (front) of Ateneo and Jinni Mondejar of SSC take on separate foes today.
AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Staying in saddle at a steep price

By Jasmine W. Payo

WINNING COMES AT AN EXPENSIVE PRICE for equestrienne Daniella Montinola Virata.

As much as she loves competing in the international stage, reality sets in the moment Virata dismounts from her eight-year-old mare Patricia.

"There are expenses such as hotel rooms for myself, my groom, my coach, feeds of the horse," said Virata, a recent guest at the PSA Forum.

One international competition could set back the petite 19-year-old by as much as $9,000 to $10,000. Transporting her horse alone to a neighboring Asian country may cost $4,000 in air freight charges.

"We're not that rich," said Virata, granddaughter of former Finance Secretary Cesar Virata. "We mostly rely on our family connections to keep me in this sport."

Despite all the financial worries, Virata has managed to stay on top of her game in the last four years.

Just three months ago, the bubbly teen captured three major show jumping events in Le Mans, France, including the Amateurs Class Le Mans.

"I may be small, but what is important is your partnership with the horse," said Virata, who trains daily for two hours at the Manila Polo Club. "I always give my all."

Last year, Virata bagged the title in the 2006 Young Riders World Cup (Southeast Asian League) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Virata, a humanities student at Ateneo, also earned a gold in the 2005 World Cup qualifier (SEA League, 1.10) class in Manila, a silver in the 2004 Australian Youth Olympics and the overall crown in the 2003 Lo Wu Easter show in Hong Kong and the 2003 FEI World Jumping Challenge (1.05) class champion in Manila.

Although PLDT Business Solutions has already offered to back her up, Virata said she relentlessly seeks for more patrons to take care of her other financial problems.

And Virata can only hope that there would be no funding shortfall as she prepares for the FEI World Jumping Challenge and World Cup Qualifier (SEA) League in Kuala Lumpur in the coming months.

The events will serve as Virata's tryout for the Philippine equestrian team that will compete in the 24th Southeast Asian Games in Thailand this December.

"I really believe I can excel in this sport," she said.

Saan ka ba nakatira?
- Tony Meloto, Gawad Kalinga
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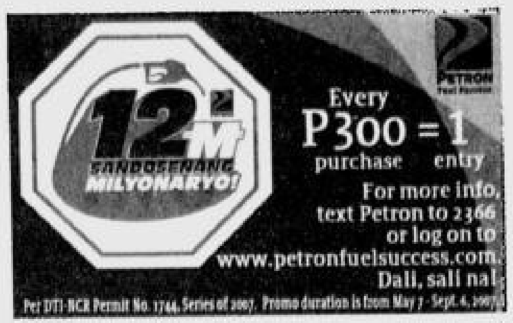

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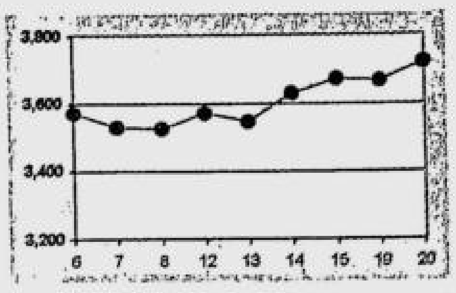
RP stocks continue record-breaking run

Positive economic outlook fuels heavy buying



THE PHILIPPINE STOCK MARKET CONTINUED ITS record-breaking run.

Share prices gained another 1.41 percent yesterday to another all-time high with investors positive on the economic outlook, dealers said.

The upswing in major Asian markets and in New York overnight buoyed investor sentiment, overshadowing concerns the government may struggle to keep its budget gap within target this year because of weak revenues, they added.

The composite index added 51.74 points at 3,718.88 after also setting a new intraday high of 3,721.26. The all-share index jumped 35.30 points to 2,366.64.

There were 95 advancers and 39 decliners, while 38 stocks were unchanged.

A total of 6.64 billion shares worth P6.38 billion changed hands.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), the country's biggest telecoms firm and the biggest in terms of market capitalization, jumped P45 to P2,685, tracking gains in its American Depositary Receipts overnight.

"PLDT is sort of a proxy for the Philippine economy. Foreign institutional investors are maintaining their buy call on the Philippines given the country's solid fundamentals," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

"Technically the market is overbought. But fundamentally, and given the strong inflows, we expect the market to hit new highs in the coming sessions, and this certainly is the perfect time for IPOs," he added.

Two Philippine companies are scheduled to launch their IPOs this month—Aboitiz Power and Phoenix Petroleum—which together may raise around P12.5 billion. *(See story on Page B2.)*

Lim Su Sian, an economist at Singapore-based DBS Bank, expects the Philippine economy to continue expanding, by 5.5 percent this year and in 2008, from 5.4 percent in 2006.

"While it is too premature to conclude that will be able to balance the budget by 2008 as promised, steady revenue growth should nevertheless be sufficient to keep the positive fiscal story in place, even if no upgrades in ratings/outlook have come through yet so far this year," Lim added.

The government said Tuesday the budget swung back to a deficit of P1.7 billion in May after a P12-billion surplus in April amid weaker than expected tax collections.

For the five months to May, the deficit stood at P41.8 billion, and the government remains optimistic the full-year target ceiling will not be exceeded. *AFP*

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **Breaktime:** Blame thrower /B2
■ **Taiwan comes to aid** of Subic investors /B3
■ **Developer taps** $1.1-B gaming market /B4

BIR probes big firms' tax payments

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE, criticized for shortfalls in its tax collections, has started looking into the business operations of large corporate taxpayers suspected of underdeclaring their income.

Deputy Commissioner Lilian Hefti of the BIR said the Large Taxpayers Service (LTS) has recorded a noticeable drop in the taxes paid in the previous months by some of the highest-earning corporations.

LTS is the unit of the BIR tasked to collect taxes and audit financial statements of companies considered as large taxpayers. There are 1,289 taxpayers covered by the LTS.

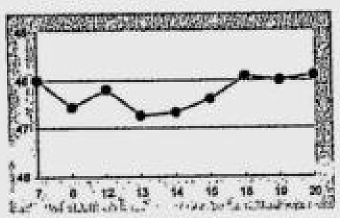
Based on the definition from the Internal Revenue Code, a large taxpayer is one whose net worth is at least P300 million, has an annual withholding tax liability of at least P1 million, has value-added tax liability of at least P100,000 for any quarter, and has at least P1 million in excise tax liability for a year.

Hefti said that large corporate taxpayers usually targetted a year-on-year growth in revenues and were therefore expected to maintain a rising trend in tax payment. A substantial drop in the taxes they remit, therefore, serves as basis for an audit or investigation.

Without disclosing names, Hefti said the BIR has started conducting a

BIR PROBES/ B2

INDICATORS

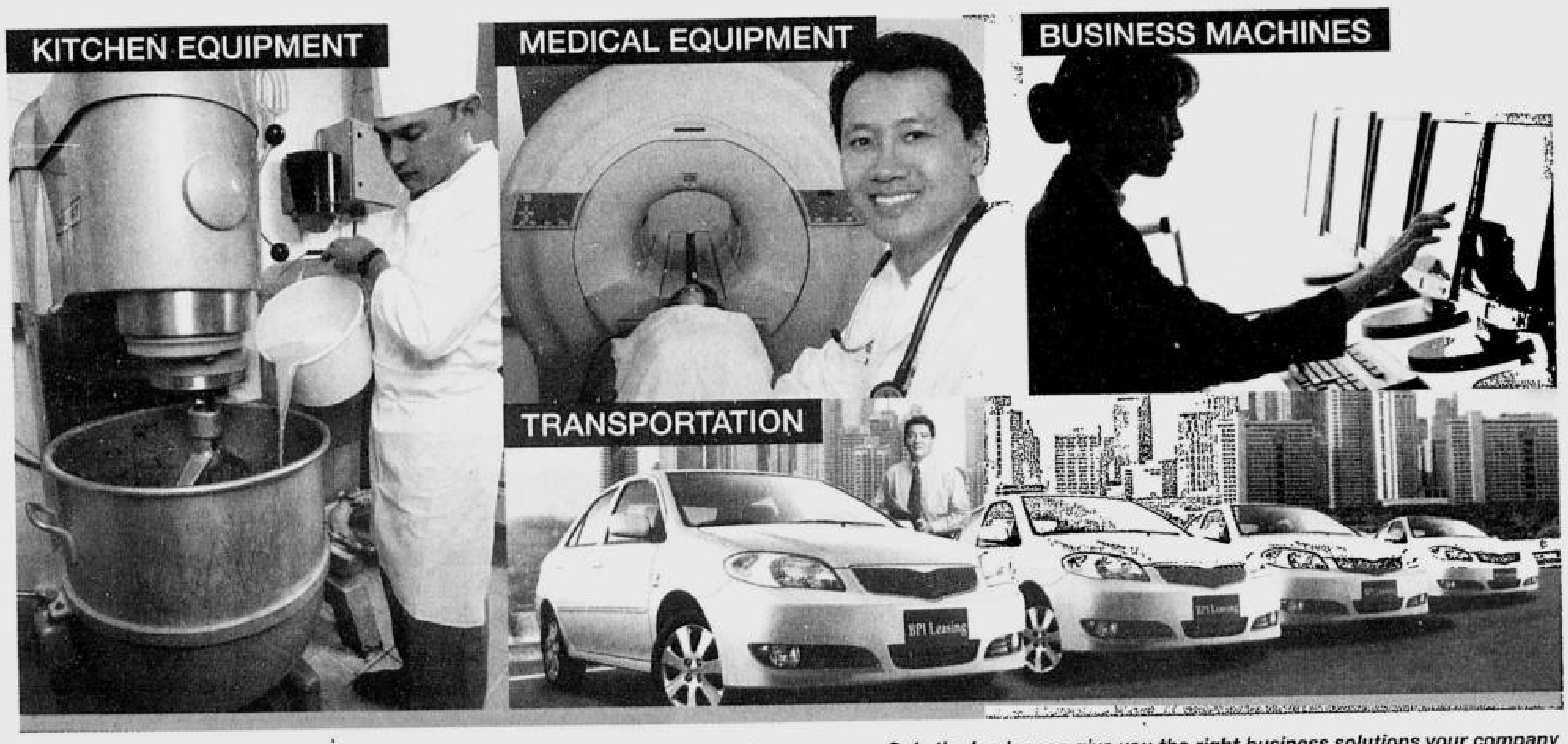


JUNE

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P45.90 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 20, 2007



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Phoenix Petroleum starts IPO roadshow, sees 56% profit hike

By Daxim L. Lucas

OIL STORAGE AND RETAILING FIRM Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc. (PPPI) may see a significant increase in its earnings this year based on strong sales in the first four months and the expected branch expansion that its initial public offering (IPO) would fund.

Speaking to prospective investors yesterday, Phoenix Petroleum chief financial officer Teodoro A. Polinga said the firm was on track to reporting a net income of P116 million by year's end, based on trends from January to April 2007.

If achieved, this level would mark a 56-percent increase in the firm's net income from P74.2 million in 2006.

Polinga said the company may even report higher earnings once it is able to put up new outlets with the funds from the IPO. Its shares are presently being offered to the public, with listing on the bourse set for early next month.

The firm would be the first independent petroleum player to list its shares on the stock exchange since the oil deregulation law was passed in 1998. It is based in Davao City and the bulk of its operations are in eastern and southern Mindanao.

The IPO, which is being firmly underwritten by BDO Capital and Investment Corp., is making available 36.25 million new and existing common shares at a price range of P6.08 to P11.30 each.

At this range, the firm could raise anywhere from P176 million to P327 million, depending on investors' response to the ongoing roadshow.

"Net proceeds will be used by the company for capital expenditures and to increase its working capital," Phoenix Petroleum said in a statement. "The company intends to establish terminal operations in other locations, expand its dealership network and services, as well as the necessary logistical requirements to support these activities."

At the end of last year, Phoenix Petroleum had 20 retail service stations, gaining an estimated 5 percent of the southern Mindanao petroleum market. As of end-March 2007, eight new Phoenix retail service stations have been completed or are under construction.

The company is finalizing negotiations for the lease of two pieces of property in Mindanao for use as oil depots and terminals. The two depots are intended to support the expansion of its operations in other regions of the country.

Phoenix Petroleum also has been the exclusive logistics service provider of Cebu Pacific Air Inc. for the airline's operations in Cagayan de Oro City, Davao City and Cotabato City. Last year, Asian Spirit also signed up with the company for their petroleum needs.

Blame thrower

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AS USUAL, IN HIS MONTHLY PRESS briefing, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves must blame somebody else for this cute administration's missing its revenue targets. As usual!

But, boss, who is the official in charge of money matters, in the first place?

Well, Teves just had to tell media people the other day that the government's revenue "shortfall" last month was due to the "inefficiency" of the BIR, particularly Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag.

Media reports (not the INQUIRER) then immediately talked about the "falling" collection of the BIR. Wrong!

Again—the BIR collection still went up.

But Teves was taking Buñag to task for the BIR's not meeting the "targets" set by the Department of Finance, which were all based on wrong (but of course) assumptions on the GDP growth, inflation and interest rates.

So Teves blames it all on Buñag's "inefficiency." I see! And does that sound like a rationalization for the persistent Malacañang "power-play-cum-squid-tactics" against Buñag or what?

Inefficiency? The supposed "team captain" of Gloriaetta's economic team talks about "inefficiency" in the BIR and its chief? Can you believe that?

And this is the BIR chief who, in only his first year in public office, after an illustrious 30-plus-year career in the private sector as a taxation law expert, broke BIR records of sorts by raising the tax take in 2006 by P114 billion.

You call that "inefficient?"

In business, you see, when they badmouth the BIR, they always talk about "corruption" and "harassment," forgodsakes!

Yet Teves can only talk about "inefficiency." Perhaps he was only being diplomatic. Perhaps!

Clearly, however, bad blood already exists between Teves and Buñag. When Teves badmouths Buñag to media, like he did the other day, nobody expects him to be tactful, okay.

Methinks Teves simply could not accuse Buñag of corruption, because as everybody in big business and the Catholic Church knows, Buñag is clean.

I just cannot stomach saying the same thing about most of the Cabinet members.

* * *

THE BOARD of Philcomsat Holdings Corp., or PHC, is turning the tables against their accuser—the Africa-Bildner group.

PHC is a subsidiary of Philcomsat, a PCGG-sequestered company owned by the famous group of alleged Marcos cronies. You know, names like Poblador, Africa and Nieto.

Now, although Philcomsat is still under PCGG sequestration, it remains under the control of the group. It is a bankrupt corporation, posting a loss of P72 million last year.

On the other hand, the cash and asset rich PHC is under the care of PCGG nominees led by Enrique Locsin, the brother of Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin.

Quoting a report of the Senate committee investigating the allegation of stealing in PHC, media reports lately accused the PHC board of … well, "stealing."

The PHC board said: "Up to now no evidence was even presented to support their allegations against some PHC officials whom they tagged as 'misappropriating' PHC funds.

"In fact, it was the other way around. Since its inception in 1996, PHC has evolved into a more competitive company. From a mere P16-million capitalization the company is now a profitable firm with at least P1.5 billion in assets to date."

"This disgruntled faction (apparently the Africa-Bildner group) has suffered several judicial setbacks in their attempt to wrest control and management of PHC from its current directors and officers. Their keen interest to wrest control and management of PHC could be explained by the fact that it is the most liquid and profitable company in the Philcomsat group."

The media reports said that the PCGG and its nominees in the Philcomsat and PHC boards dissipated the funds of both Philcomsat and PHC.

The PHC board said: "This is absolutely not true. While Philcomsat is a sequestered company, its board is not controlled by the PCGG or its appointed nominees.

"It is still the group of private minority shareholders led by Erlinda Bildner herself and Victor Africa that control the management and operations of the companies.

"This unusual condition remains in limbo despite the fact that the SEC and the Supreme Court have already upheld the election to the board of Philcomsat of PCGG nominees.

"This dispute is now the subject of numerous court cases because Bildner and her group have continuously refused to surrender control of Philcomsat to the duly constituted board and management led by PCGG nominees."

The PHC board then alleged that the same group dissipated the funds of POTC and Philcomsat by entering into various anomalous deals, such as the following:

- Sale of POTC aircraft (Cessna Citation) worth $1.2 million, and Philcomsat Aerospatiale helicopter worth P16 million.

(The PCGG did not authorize the sale, according to PHC, and the Africa-Bildner group never accounted for the proceeds.)

- Unauthorized management contract with I-Freedom Communications Corp. and Everlink Intertrade Corp., involving Philcomsat's legislative franchise.
- Questionable investments of Philcomsat in various stocks, such as Oriental Petroleum and Mineral Corp., with losses amounting to more than P200 million.

(The Philcomsat board, according to PHC, was only authorized to invest in stocks of commercial and mining companies, but only up to P15 million.)

- Acquisition of real estate property in Cavite worth at least P235 million.

(PHC said it has documents to show that the property was also under the name of Pilar Development Corp., which is of course claiming ownerhip.)

- Investments in Montemar Beach Club, a leisure resort corporation that is not a business line of Philcomsat.
- Purchase of land in Bagac, Bataan, amounting to P540 million.
- Unauthorized bank account (BPI Family) in the name of PHC, with individuals in the Africa-Bildner group as signatories.

(PHC said that Bildner has been saying that she has "nothing to do with PHC.")

* * *

BY THE WAY, from what we gathered from our sources in the Senate, that committee report (the same basis for the onslaught of media reports) was a midnight express type. You know—it did not pass through the usual process. Hmm.

BIR probes big firms' tax payments

From page B1

surveillance of large companies whose tax remittances as of May this year posted a year-on-year decline.

"In conducting the investigation, BIR personnel are sent personally to the sites of business operation of the subject taxpayer," Hefti said.

Specifically, BIR personnel check whether receipts are properly issued by those engaged in retail, or estimates the volume of inventory of manufacturing firms.

LTS accounts for 65 percent of the total tax collection target of the BIR, which is tasked to collect P765 billion this year.

In the first quarter, the BIR collected only P143 billion, falling short of the P155.2-billion goal for the period.

Tax collections in the five months to May this year hit P285.6 billion. This means the BIR still has to collect P87.7 billion in June to meet the first-half target of P373.3 billion.

The BIR is hard-pressed to beef up efforts to shore up collection because the budget deficit as of May exceeded the target.

The deficit hit P41.8 billion in the first five months of the year, already surpassing the P31.3-billion ceiling set for the first semester. This means the government had to post a budget surplus of P10.5 billion in June to meet its goal.

Hefti said the surveillance on large corporate taxpayers was just one of the measures the BIR adopted to address the tax collection shortfall. Another measure was to link the BIR's database with those of other government agencies that may provide information relevant to tax collection.

CURRENCIES

June 20, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.744657	1.000000	45.9110
Japan	Yen	0.006038	0.008109	0.3723
United Kingdom	Pound	1.481048	1.988900	91.3124
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.095261	0.127926	5.8732
Switzerland	Franc	0.600433	0.806322	37.0190
Canada	Dollar	0.700853	0.941176	43.2103
Singapore	Dollar	0.484298	0.650364	29.8589
Australia	Dollar	0.629093	0.844809	38.7860
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.975427	2.652801	121.7927
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.198575	0.266667	12.2429
Brunei	Dollar	0.482728	0.648256	29.7621
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000112	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.023126	0.031056	1.4258
UAE	Dirham	0.202760	0.272287	12.5010
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.342900	61.6539
Korea	Won	0.000803	0.001078	0.0495
China	Yuan**	0.097756	0.131277	6.0271
Argentina	Peso	0.242362	0.325468	14.9426
Brazil	Real	0.391204	0.525348	24.1193
Denmark	Kroner	0.134356	0.180427	8.2836
India	Rupee	0.018351	0.024643	1.1314
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216785	0.291121	13.3657
Mexico	New Peso	0.069381	0.093172	4.2776
New Zealand	Dollar	0.563494	0.756716	34.7416
South Africa	Rand	0.105007	0.141014	6.4741
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022470	0.030175	1.3854

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—June 19, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen
** Asian time closing rate as of June 19, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 20, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCK	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.2	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	13	13.25	12.5	12.5	331,700
71.5	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	70.5	71	70	71	996,200
73.5	42.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	72	73	72	72.5	3,597,700
935	630	China Banking Corp.	900	905	900	905	2,360
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc	0.54	0.58	0.54	0.58	32,640,000
75.5	30.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	74.5	75.5	74.5	75.5	6,136,300
59.5	32	Philippine National Bank	56	59.5	56	59	755,300
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	64.5	66	64.5	64.5	3,300
72	40	Philippine Bank of Communications	51	51	51	51	100
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	37.5	37.5	36.5	37	4,598,800
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	84	85	84	84	233,800
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	63	63	62	62.5	399,300
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
3.81	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	639,000
1.46	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.24	1.28	1.22	1.28	2,349,000
11.25	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	9.7	11.25	9.5	11.25	1,761,000
7.5	3.5	Filipino Fund Inc.	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	33,000
1.04	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	200,000
1,710	1,500	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,670	1,670	1,670	1,670	470
5	4.05	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.6	4.7	4.55	4.7	11,883,000
2.95	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.95	1,000,000
1,005	210	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	695	785	695	785	23,420
2.250	1,895	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,080	2,100	2,080	2,100	430
1.94	1.16	iVantage Corp	1.8	1.84	1.8	1.84	4,967,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
67.5	41	First Gen Corp.	66	67.5	66	67.5	543,500
88	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	85	86.5	85	86.5	629,500
12.75	6.9	Manila Water Co. Inc.	12	12.25	11.75	11.75	7,962,000
102	13.75	Manila Electric Co. "A"	96.5	100	96.5	99	513,900
104	20.25	Manila Electric Co. "B"	98	102	98	101	1,391,000
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.3	5.6	46,737,000
5.7	3.4	Petron Corp.	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	24,594,000
1.9	0.9	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.66	1.7	1.6	1.64	1,244,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5.9	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.6	5.9	5.5	5.5	580,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.34	2.34	2.32	2.32	1,090,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26	26	26	29,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	55.5	56.5	55	55.5	254,100
1.9	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.74	1.78	1.74	1.78	663,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.44	2.44	2.42	2.42	56,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. "A"	68	69	68	68.5	126,000
88	68.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	75	75.5	74.5	75	128,900
0.61	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.5	390,000
4.3	2	Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	5,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.25	18.5	7,439,500
		CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
5.8	1.15	EEI Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	774,000
4.6	1.06	Fortune Cement Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.35	4.35	27,000
9.2	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.6	8.8	8.3	8.5	693,000
7	1.2	Republic Cement Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	204,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.76	1.78	2,030,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.7	1,745,000
1.34	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.26	1.32	1,287,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.43	0.06	Picop Resources Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	12,250,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	283,000
0.145	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.14	149,300,000
1.22	0.18	APC Group Inc.	1.18	1.22	1.14	1.14	39,356,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.85	3	2.7	2.8	2,690,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	35,000
0.018	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	76,100,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	120,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	8.7	8.9	8.7	8.8	16,422,000
0.017	0.0065	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	62,600,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.3	42,429,000
1.2	0.47	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	1.06	1.14	1.06	1.14	4,573,000
1.5	0.085	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	1.06	1.3	1.06	1.06	1,143,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.65	2.7	2.6	2.65	4,855,000
5.6	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3.2	3.5	2.9	3.1	164,000
16	4.5	Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc. "A"	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	1,000
590	272.92	Ayala Corp.	575	580	570	580	376,170
13	6.96	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	12.75	13	12.75	13	20,000
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources & Holdings Co. Inc.	4.75	4.8	4.7	4.75	353,000
5.4	0.97	Benpres Holdings Corp.	5.2	5.3	5	5	17,176,000
9.8	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9	9	8.9	8.9	2,990,000
7.7	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.9	7.7	6.8	7.7	7,527,000
3.55	1.14	House of Investments Inc.	3	3.2	3	3.1	1,880,000
14.5	5.3	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.75	236,600
2.6	0.95	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. "A"	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	11,000
0.69	0.185	Medco Holdings Inc.	0.63	0.65	0.63	0.64	910,000
30	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	27	28.5	26	26.5	1,473,800
11.5	0.19	Multitech Investments Corp.	10.75	11.5	10.25	10.5	20,396,900
5.4	1.2	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.75	3.85	3.75	3.75	185,000
0.034	0.009	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.032	0.033	0.032	0.032	48,000,000
1.54	0.8	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	253,000
0.69	0.16	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.65	0.69	0.63	0.64	14,500,000
450	205	SM Investments Corp.	435	437.5	430	435	210,670
2.2	0.69	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.78	1.8	1.78	1.8	422,000
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.67	0.68	0.63	0.63	29,440,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.94	220,000
1.6	0.68	South China Resources Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.56	260,000
0.72	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.68	0.72	0.68	0.71	32,700,000
0.69	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.65	0.68	0.62	0.68	830,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.78	1.78	994,000
1.06	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.99	1.06	0.98	0.98	5,520,000
19.25	8.54	Ayala Land Inc.	18.5	19.25	18.5	19	16,193,000
1.78	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.74	1.78	1.74	1.76	8,630,000
4.7	1.8	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.5	4.65	4.5	4.6	1,453,000
2.9	1	Cityland Development Corp.	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	172,000
0.72	0.25	Crown Equities Inc.	0.7	0.72	0.65	0.7	13,110,000
0.71	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.68	0.71	0.68	0.68	39,150,000
3.1	0.72	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.95	535,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.84	0.88	0.84	0.85	81,180,000
0.32	0.027	Ever Gotesco Resources & Hold'gs Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	21,870,000
1.38	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.28	1.38	1.28	1.36	91,639,000
2.4	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	2.18	2.4	2.18	2.36	207,248,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.1	2,515,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. "A"	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.013	73,600,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. "B"	0.016	0.016	0.014	0.014	64,900,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.48	24,680,000
1.1	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.99	1.1	0.99	1.08	62,590,000
4.4	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	4.1	4.2	4.05	4.1	15,774,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	153,000
0.67	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.65	0.66	0.63	0.64	21,220,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.66	0.73	0.65	0.71	76,150,000
5.8	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	36,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	20.25	20.75	20.25	20.5	12,820,400
5.4	1.23	SM Development Corp.	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	4,879,000
15	7.1	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	14.25	15	14.25	15	12,408,100
0.96	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.85	0.93	0.84	0.92	18,040,000
0.36	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.33	14,750,000
		MEDIA					
34	13.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	32	31.5	32	84,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.14	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.7	1.72	1.68	1.68	10,673,000
1,445	885	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,410	1,415	1,410	1,415	62,120
2,820	1,700	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,680	2,700	2,680	2,685	113,250
7.9	3.15	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.9	2,368,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.16	Boulevard Holdings Inc	0.32	0.33	0.3	0.32	144,380,000
10.25	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9	9.5	8	9	359,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	6.4	6.8	6.4	6.6	9,357,000
0.0525	0.0263	ISM Communications Corp.	0.044	0.047	0.044	0.047	347,700,000
2.9	1.8	Ionics Inc.	2.26	2.32	2.26	2.3	2,313,000
0.0875	0.038	Island Information & Technology Inc.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	30,400,000
2.08	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.9	1.9	568,000
0.0675	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.0575	0.0675	0.0575	0.065	2,191,900,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	4.25	4.4	4.1	4.15	13,633,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.9	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.82	1.9	1.82	1.9	591,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	6.1	6.1	6	6	208,000
32	13	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	28	28	27.5	28	744,800
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.04	2.06	2.02	2.02	620,000
1.74	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	120,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.45	3.85	3.45	3.85	3,034,000
5.2	2.7	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	5	5	5	5	58,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	4	4.05	4	4.05	80,000
0.98	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Prods. Inc.	0.85	0.92	0.85	0.89	7,270,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	1.08	1.1	1.04	1.06	4,740,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	245,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc	27	27.5	26	26	7,800
5.2	1.88	Macroasia Corp.	5	5	4.9	4.9	865,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	16	16.25	16	16.25	846,500
30	9.6	Paxys Inc.	24.75	25	24.25	24.75	190,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	496,100,000
7.6	3	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.1	352,000
7.7	3	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	95,000
21.25	5.9	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	18	18	17.5	17.75	952,900
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	13	13.25	13	13.25	39,800
5	1.7	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	34,000
2.85	0.0602	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2.65	2.7	2.6	2.7	40,588,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,580,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	5,660,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.036	0.036	0.035	0.036	620,300,000
0.041	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	100,900,000
0.024	0.0075	Omico Corp.	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.019	149,900,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.7	5.8	11,126,000
30	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	28	178,400
1.36	0.29	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.16	1.16	2,619,000
1.8	0.5	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.4	1.42	3,560,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.23	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.47	0.48	0.47	0.47	13,880,000
0.025	0.0085	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	109,000,000
0.027	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	46,100,000
28	1.5	PNOC Exploration Corp. "B"	24.5	28	24.5	28	33,800
14.62	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	218,500
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.025	0.026	0.025	0.025	486,700,000

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

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Inquirer Southern Luzon

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Teco asks Favila to look into SBMA dispute

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He even claimed that the SBMA "used force" when it forced the club's officials out of the premises.

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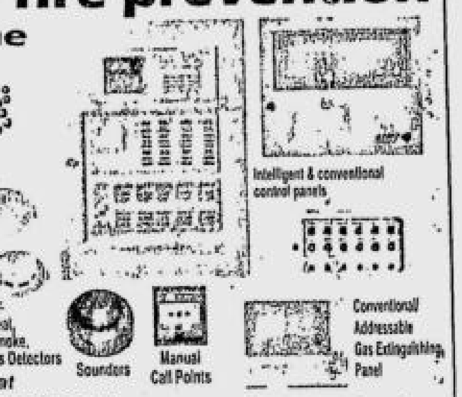
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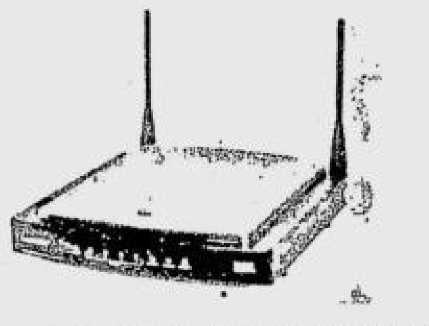

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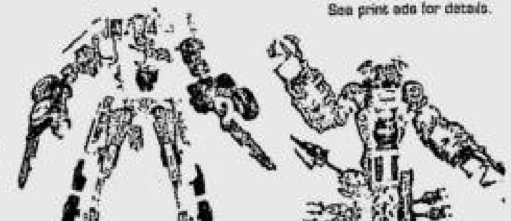

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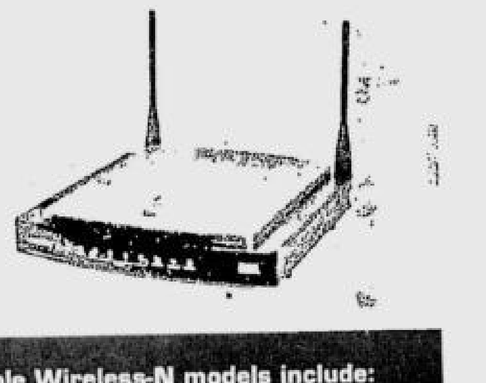

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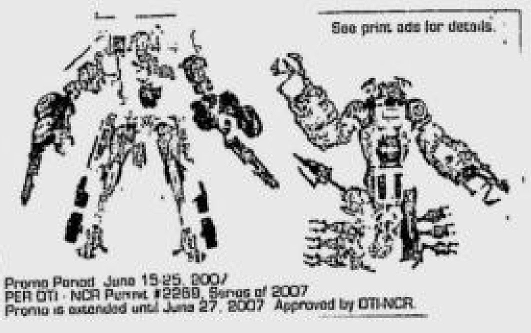

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Developer taps $1.1-B gaming market

Firm sees bright prospects for RP animation industry

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A PIONEERING FIRM IN THE COUNTRY's game development industry is going into more "serious games" as part of its efforts to secure a larger share of the $1.1-billion global game outsourcing market.

Niel Dagondon, president of Anino Entertainment, defined serious games as nonentertainment applications of game development software, which is currently being done in the United States.

Companies in the United States, for example, entice customers to try out products through video using gaming technology, Dagondon said.

"Local companies are starting to pick up on the trend and Anino is once again pioneering a trail," he added. "Anino can make a 3D environment for a real estate company that wants to sell condominium units."

He said that through serious games, customers can walk through the rooms via a computer and they can change wallpapers, arrange furniture, change color schemes without the hassle of having to do the actual physical work.

Dagondon said that Anino has so far created models for a shampoo product and a department store using serious games.

The Anino president said the local industry must push itself to the next level by venturing into new fields and expanding the talent pool if it wants to secure a slice of a market seen growing to $2.5 billion by 2010.

He said that in Asia, China got a first bite of the pie in the mid-1990s by catering to Japanese outsourcing needs, while Vietnamese game developers were "silently steering the global gaming industry toward competence."

In the Philippines, Anino helped jumpstart the sector in 2002 mainly with subcontracted jobs.

"Some foreign companies outsource only parts of a particular project," Dagondon said. "They give us a gun model and ask us to create 50 more variations because in video games, you can never run short of weapons.

Aside from that, Anino has also done variations of video game characters' clothes.

Anino Entertainment made waves in the local gaming industry when it released the first Filipino-made computer game "Anito: Defend a Land Enraged" in 2003.

Last February, Anino's "Anima Wars," a mobile phone-based video game using 3G technology, bagged the "Best in Connectivity Award 2006" at the International Mobile Gaming Awards held in Barcelona, Spain.

The Filipino-run company has a partner studio with offices in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Ukraine which is on the lookout for possible projects in the region.

Dagondon said Anino employs 50 of the country's 250 game developers, but that the firm wanted to double its workforce to be able to handle more subcontracts and projects.

"We can't always just turn them over to China and Vietnam whenever we can't accommodate," he said.

He said industry estimates show that 60 percent of game studios from the major markets outsource jobs, and the figure is expected to rise to 90 percent by next year.

IFC not keen on raising PNOC stake

By Abigail L. Ho

THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCE Corp., the private sector arm of the World Bank, is not interested in further increasing its equity in PNOC Energy Development Corp.

IFC invested $50 million in the PNOC unit when the state-run firm conducted an initial public offering late last year.

The $50-million investment gave IFC a 5-percent stake in the geothermal energy development company.

Jesse Ang, IFC acting country manager for the Philippines and Thailand, said IFC was "happy" with what it had sunk into PNOC-EDC, and there was unlikely to be an additional infusion anytime soon.

"For us, we think we have fulfilled our role in helping in the IPO with our presence, and we're helping right now in the corporate side with the company because that is really their request as they move from an all-government board to a board with more independent directors, and maybe eventually with more nongovernment independent directors," he said in a briefing.

Prior to PNOC-EDC's listing on the Philippine Stock Exchange on Dec. 13, 2006, the IFC said its investment in the state firm was in support of the "Philippine government's goal of privatizing energy sector assets."

The World Bank arm added that its participation in the IPO would help improve the efficiency and aid in the expansion of the geothermal energy sector, thus helping boost the contribution of indigenous and renewable sources of energy to the country's energy mix.

"We look at IFC's investment in our offering as an affirmation of our strategy to attract private sector participation and explore new sources of renewable energy," PNOC-EDC president and chief executive Paul Aquino had said.

Ford generates 100 new jobs in Laguna

By Niña Catherine Calleja
Inquirer Southern Luzon

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—AUTO motive manufacturer Ford Philippines has started production at its newest engine plant costing P1.1 billion, which generated at least 100 new jobs.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo attended the launch of the engine plant, which is considered one of the biggest foreign investments in the country.

With the President during the launch were Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes and US acting Deputy Chief of Mission to the Philippines, Rick Haynes.

The new plant would produce E20 Flex Fuel Vehicle (FFV) engines, which use traditional gasoline or a mix that contains up to 20 percent bio-ethanol fuel.

Cherry Ramirez, Ford Group Philippines' assistant vice president for corporate and government affairs, said the FFV engines would be exported to Africa, assuring dollar revenues for the country.

"It will also be exported to the Asean markets such as Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam," she added.

In a statement, Ford estimated that production of FFV engines would reach 105,000 units worth about P6.5 billion.

Ramirez said that FFV engines are capable of reducing vehicles' carbon emission by up to 60 percent.

Dave Alden, vice president of marketing, sales and service said: "This new facility will further strengthen the Philippines as a linchpin in our FFV strategy for the Asean region."

He said Ford would continue to develop the use of biofuels though the FFV technology.

Ramirez said the new investment was beneficial because it provides employment, produces vehicles for export to different countries and is helpful to the environment.

Ramirez explained that once the volume of production steps up, Ford would definitely hire more workers.

Ford's present workers, she said, come mainly from the communities near the plant site in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Globe sells 'affordable' 3G phones

By Riza T. Olchondra

GLOBE TELECOM INC. HAS STARTED SELLing the LG KU250, touted as the most affordable 3G handset, with integrated Yahoo! mobile services.

Globe Telecom product specialist Dominique Marie Godino and Jeff Hong, president and CEO of LG Electronics Philippines Inc., said in a briefing that 100,000 new 3G users were expected to avail themselves of the phone this year.

"Initially, young office workers are seen to try out the phone first. They are known to be early adaptors," Godino said.

The LG KU250 supports video calls and the popular audio and video formats, and can take video and audio recordings.

It may be recalled that the GSM Association chose the LG KU250 for its "3G for All" campaign, which was announced last February during the 3GSM Congress in Barcelona.

Twelve operators, including Globe and rival operator Smart Communications Inc., consequently agreed to offer the LG KU250 in their respective markets.

Relatedly, Globe announced yesterday that it had signed a strategic mobile partnership agreement with Internet search engine Yahoo!.

Under the terms of the agreement, Globe Telecom will distribute Yahoo!'s popular mobile search service, Yahoo! oneSearch, Yahoo! Go for Mobile and other mobile Internet services on the myGlobe WAP site.

Yahoo! mobile services make it easier for people to search for and find better results and instant answers on their mobile devices using oneSearch.

Yahoo! oneSearch gives consumers access to news, images, finance, weather, Flickr, web and mobile web results with easy navigation to other websites.

For example, if someone wants to look for the latest information on a city, they just need to type "Manila" into the search box to receive relevant results based on their search queries such as weather, Flickr photos, web images, latest news articles and more.

"Globe brings the best Internet experience to mobile users in the Philippines and our groundbreaking partnership with Yahoo! will enhance our offer to our subscribers," said Globe president and CEO Gerardo C. Ablaza Jr. in a statement.

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OBITUARIES

RAFAEL PALMA

(Ret. US Airforce)

peacefully joined our Creator
on June 17, 2007 at the age of 61.

His loving wife **Rebecca**; children and children-in-law **Vanessa** and **Jack D. Rose**, **Camille** and **Christopher Harriday** and **Daniel**; grandchildren **Jack Palma**, **Isabella Victoria** and **Alexandra Caroline** and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at St. Joseph Hall beside the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Pagsanjan, Laguna.

Interment will be on June 22, 2007 at the Liwasang Alaala Memorial Park, Pagsanjan, Laguna at 10:00 a.m. after the Mass.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

In Loving Memory

Eugenia Suarez Atienza

December 3, 1910 - June 22, 1995
Wife of General Rigoberto J. Atienza (†)

Her children Zenaida and David Clymer, Eloisa and Victor Lim, Herminia Atienza-Ilano, Rosalinda and Balbino Hernando, Rolando and Cecilia Atienza, and Josefina Atienza-Salvaña, grandchildren and great-grandchildren invite relatives and friends and readers to remember her in their prayers and to join them in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on Friday, June 22, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Chapel, Camp General Rigoberto J. Atienza, Libis, Quezon City. Holy Mass will also be offered for her at 6:30 a.m. at the same chapel.

O Sacred Heart, o Love Divine
Make our love so like to Thine.

Madrigal, 81

LUCILA FADUL MADRIGAL, A NATIVE OF Paete, Laguna, passed away on June 16, 2007 of kidney failure at the age of 81.

She left behind her children Pastor (deceased) & Ely Madrigal; Vicente & Viring Madrigal; Felisa & Sid Dalope; Patricia & Dong Figueroa; Nona & Bong Reyes; Mike & Minie Madrigal; grandchildren, relatives and friends.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Pasig City. Interment today, June 21, 10:00 a.m. at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Notify family and friends of a loved one who had just passed away.
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PNB settles last of its liabilities with PDIC

Bank exits rehabilitation program upon payment of P6.1B in dues

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Bank has announced that it will formally exit from its rehabilitation now that it has settled its outstanding liabilities with the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., amounting to P6.1 billion.

The PNB said in a statement that the settlement of the last tranche of its liabilities to the PDIC was made four years ahead of schedule.

The banks said the loan payment was made possible by its excess liquidity resulting from its healthy financial performance.

"This (loan settlement) is definitely a milestone as far as government's support for rehabilitation (of an organization) is concerned," said Cristina Orbeta, executive vice president and officer in charge of the PDIC.

Robust growth

PNB president Omar Byron Mier said in the statement that the bank posted a robust growth in the first quarter, generating P308.3 million in net income. This was 60 percent higher than the income posted in the same period last year.

Mier said that this has put the institution on track to meet the goal of hitting a net income of P1 billion for the entire year.

"PNB is very much excited over its prospects to return to the premiere echelons of the country's banking industry, which it has long held in the past," Mier said.

PNB in late 2000 sought rehabilitation due to liquidity problems. Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) extended a P25-billion financial assistance to the bank following huge withdrawals.

In May 2002, the government and the Tan group sealed a memorandum of agreement, which settled the liquidity assistance by way of increasing the government's stake to 45 percent from 16.58 percent, trimming Mr. Tan's holdings to 45 percent from 68 percent.

PNB had earlier paid portion of its PDIC loan when its financial condition began improving as a result of the rehabilitation.

"Because of PDIC's help, the problem that PNB had to face prior to the rehabilitation program is already a thing of the past," Mier concluded.

The bank also reported earlier that it has significantly improved its level of exposure to bad debts.

It said its non performing loans as of March this year had hit P12 billion, declining from the P28 billion in January 2006.

Expanding niche

The PNB said earlier that it has moved to boost its services to big corporate clients market, expanding their niche, which used to focus more on small- and medium-sized businesses.

PNB used to cater more to SMEs, with two-thirds of its branches all over the country being situated outside Metro Manila.

The bank also said it intends to increase its loans to businesses and to consumers, planning to become an aggressive player in the sale of credit cards.

The plans are intended to achieve the target of having a return on equity (ROE) of at least 15 percent from only a single digit as of last year.

He said PNB intends to be at par with the likes of Union Bank and BPI, whose ROEs are between 15 and 16 percent.

The government previously held 45 percent of PNB, same as Lucio Tan's shareholding.

But the government sold its shares to the Tan group last year as part of its revenue-raising effort to help trim its budget deficit.

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AN ALLIED BANK BRANCH IN CHINA
President Macapagal Arroyo's official trip to the People's Republic of China included a brief visit to a branch of Allied Commercial Bank in the industrial city of Chongqing, China. Allied Bank founder Lucio C. Tan (left) accompanies Ms Arroyo, Carmen Tan and Allied board member Domingo Chua on a tour of the establishment.

UK firm out to secure China Sea contract

By Abigail L. Ho

A FIRM BASED IN THE UNITED Kingdom expects to secure the Department of Energy's approval to convert into a service contract its geophysical survey and exploration contract (GSEC) 101, which contains the promising Sampaguita gas find.

According to Russell Harvey, chief executive of Forum Energy Plc, the company has made "substantial progress" in its negotiations for the conversion of GSEC 101, and expects the DOE's approval to be given "soon."

"The company has satisfied all the requirements of the DOE, and has received positive support in its application, and is expecting ratification in the near future," Harvey told shareholders during a presentation.

The unique location of GSEC 101 license in the South China Sea—a field that is "likely be exclusively licensed to the state companies of the Philippines, China and Vietnam"—would place Forum in a unique position of being the only private firm with access to the highly prospective area, he said.

"The company has, therefore, focused its efforts on realizing this outcome and having the available resources to perform, following conversion," Harvey said.

"With the political sensitivities of the area, the company needs to be in a position to manage the eventual timeframe," he added. "The Sampaguita discovery will require considerable expenditure to properly evaluate and the company is considering a number of options to satisfy these requirements."

Apart from the Sampaguita discovery, Forum had expressed interest in establishing a liquefied natural gas facility in the country, following third-party confirmation that the Sampaguita gas find has at least 3.4 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of proven gas reserves.

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Private sector help sought for small power grids

THE STATE-RUN NATIONAL Power Corp. is pushing for the privatization of the missionary power grids under its Small Power Utilities Group (Spug) to ensure their long term viability.

Napocor president Cyril del Callar said the privatization of the small island grids at the soonest possible time would be greatly beneficial not only to consumers but to the government as well.

The state firm, for one, had been heavily subsidizing power costs in these Spug areas by charging way below its production costs.

Del Callar said having the private sector step in would help ease costs for Napocor as well as reduce subsidies that other power consumers had to shoulder.

"Our electrification program under the Spug aims to jumpstart economic activity in any off-grid or rural area without electricity," he said. "The provision of electricity in these areas, comes with a cost, especially when they are not yet viable for private investment."

He said the state firm would reduce missionary power subsidies by at least 30 percent, or P1 billion, a year. This amount could then be channeled to other missionary areas needing electricity.

"The P1 billion in annual savings in missionary subsidies can be used by the Department of Energy to electrify 1,000 isolated (communities)," he said.

According to Napocor data, its Spug generates power at an average cost of P14 per kilowatt-hour (kWh). It charges between P4.80 and P5.64 per kWh, or an average of only P5.30 per kWh, however, in consideration of the standard of living in the 73 Spug areas.

"The difference between our generation costs and selling rate is the subsidy that we provide for these areas, part of which are recovered through the universal levy, amounting to 3.5 centavos per kWh," Del Callar said.

An initial 14 Spug areas were identified for privatization.

Abigail L. Ho

ePLDT offers on-demand call center applications

By Riza T. Olchondra

ePLDT, the information and communications technology arm of PLDT, launched on Wednesday a pre-integrated set of Internet-based call center applications that are easy for start-ups to install and run according to their needs.

ePLDT said in a media briefing on Wednesday that the service, called Unified Contact Center Plus, is currently used for customer management services in such sectors as telecommunications, tourism and finance, retail and manufacturing.

ePLDT COO Helen T. Marquez said the company is initially offering 1,200 seats, with a 30-percent target growth every year. ePLDT's on-demand system can support up to 10,000 seats.

The service is powered by on-demand technology from CosmoCom, a global leader in unified customer communications and on-demand contact center technology.

CosmoCom Asia-Pacific sales director Rayman Wong said the initial market in the Philippines are the business process outsourcing firms who are ePLDT's clients for continuity of service. The next market segments are in finance, health, tourism, hospitality, and even small and medium businesses.

"We believe our partnership with CosmoCom will help many companies hurdle the problems faced by traditional call center solutions, particularly the prohibitive cost and complex installation," ePLDT President and CEO Ray C. Espinosa said.

Espinosa said that as telecommunication companies provide more messaging services and move to more web-based customer self-service, it has become increasingly important for business to transform their call center to a unified multichannel contact center—one that supports every contact channel in a unified way.

Maynilad Water plans to hike rates for sea transport sector

By Amy R. Remo

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES Inc. wants to increase the rate it charges the sea transport sector, which includes interisland passenger and cargo vessels, yachts and ocean-going pleasure vessels, as well as marinas and port facilities.

According to Maynilad officer-in-charge and incoming president Rogelio L. Singson, the west zone water concessionaire wants to raise sea transport rates to P62.62 per cubic meter, after charging its customers for the past 10 years with an almost flat rate of P21.84.

At the sidelines of a public consultation held yesterday, Singson told the INQUIRER that, while the average "all-in" tariff has been steadily increasing, Maynilad has not adjusted its sea transport rates since it was privatized in 1997.

The "all-in" tariff includes charges such as basic tariff, adjustment factors, foreign currency deferential adjustment and value added tax.

"The non-adjustment in the past 10 years translates to P178 million in unrealized revenue for Maynilad," Singson said. "I think it's time we adjust the STR (sea transport rates)."

He added that although Maynilad is not trying to recover the lost amount, the firm does not want its customers "to end up subsidizing what the sea transport sector should be paying for."

This segment represents only about 1 percent or less of Maynilad's water business, Singson said.

The STR used to be higher than commercial rates since it is a special service, he added.

The proposed "all-in" STR of P62.62 would include a scheduled basic tariff of P32.85, which would have to be approved by the board of directors of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

MWSS chief regulator Eduardo C. Santos said in an interview that the increase is "long overdue."

"Although there had been requests [from end users] to make the increase gradual, I think there is generally a positive response from those who would be affected," Santos said.

However, Reynaldo M. Alejandro, yard manager for Manila Yacht Club, said the proposed increase must be thoroughly studied before it can be implemented.

"Many would be hurt by this increase," said Alejandro. "Even if you say in our case that it would be the rich who'd be hit, it would still affect us."

Alejandro said Manila Yacht Club consumes about 12,000 gallons of water a day or about 45.4 cubic meters.

At the proposed rate, the club would have to pay P2,843 for water daily, from its current P992 a day.

KOICA
Korea International Cooperation Agency

KOREA INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY
Philippine Office

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) is the Korean Government's agency for ODA implementation. It is mainly responsible for bilateral grant aid and technical cooperation to the Philippines.

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- Conduct research on the overall ODA issues, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and development plans of the Philippine Government
- Liaise with local and national governments, international organizations, foreign aid agencies, NGOs and other KOICA partners

Qualifications:
- Advanced university degree in Social Sciences (Economics, Business Administration, Management, International Relations, etc.) is preferred
- Minimum three (3) years of professional work experience, preferably in the government, international organizations and foreign embassies
- Knowledge of development cooperation programs
- Good command of written and spoken English (Knowledge in Korean language is an advantage)

Applicants should send in their resume, with names and contact details of at least two work references to 1wise@koica.go.kr or rhean_dreyes@yahoo.com by close of business Friday, 29 June 2007.

Only those selected for interview will have their applications acknowledged.

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN FOR LUZON
3rd Floor, Ombudsman Bldg., Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS
(In Compliance with R.A. 7041)

GRAFT INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION OFFICER I, (2); SG-26; Item Nos. OMBA-GIO1-103-1998; OMBA-SPPO1-15-1998; Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: 3 years of experience in the practice of Law, counseling, investigation/prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research of other related work; Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR).

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT V (Stenogprahic Reporter III): SG-11; Item No. OMBA-ADAS5-89-2006; Education: Completion of two (2) years studies in college; Experience: Two (2) years of relevant experience; Training: 8 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: Career Service (Subprofessional) First Level Eligibility.

Interested applicants should submit their applications within ten (10) calendar days from the date of this publication to the Administrative Division, at the above address with the following requirements pursuant to Office Order No. 49-05:

1. A letter stating the position applied for;
2. Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (Civil Service Commission Form 212);
3. "1x1" picture (colored);
4. BAR/Board rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
5. Transcript of Records;
6. Certificates of Seminars/Training attended;
7. Service Records or Certificates from previous/present employers stating the position assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable);
8. Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
9. Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

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20 years Maxicare Healthcare Corp

Setting the standards in the managed care industry

By Marlet D. Salazar

It all started with the objective of giving patients easy access to quality healthcare. Sometimes, quality comes with a price. And the founding officers of Maxicare Healthcare Corp wanted to pave the way for working people to have the best medical assistance they could get.

Today, Maxicare continues to make an imprint as the leading health maintenance organization that gives personalized and worry-free service to its members.

"Peace of mind is what we want for our members whenever they need medical care," said Josephine Aguilar, SVP for marketing and sales. "Members should just focus on getting well and we will take care of the rest."

It was 20 years ago when a select number of concerned doctors from Makati Medical Center and several businessmen pushed forward the noble intention of giving the middle-income Filipinos access to the so-called "premier hospitals."

Service delivery

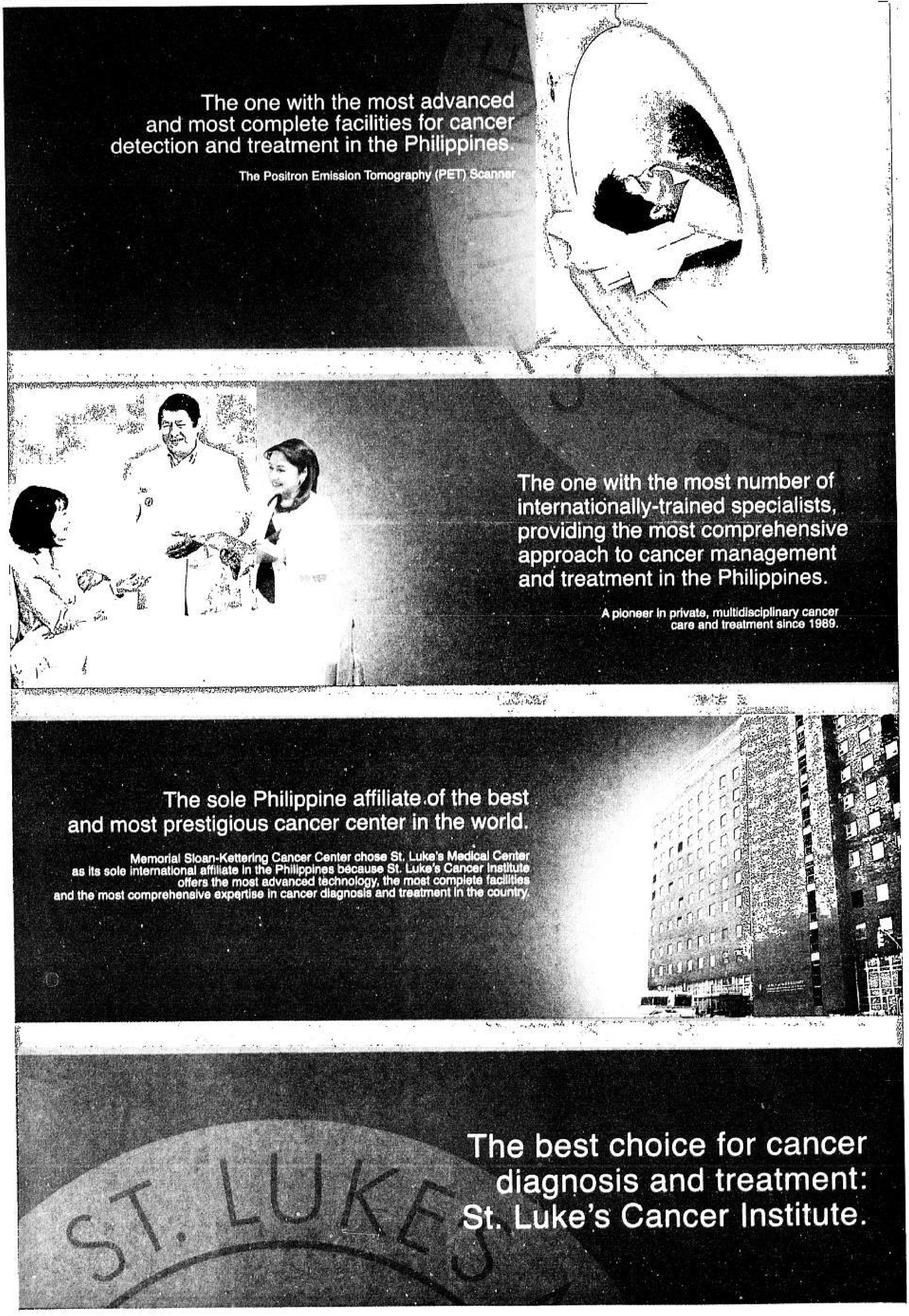
From there, it grew to be the managed care company of choice by the leading businesses in the country. Its over 250,000 members and their dependents come from the country's top 300 corporations and multinational companies.

To ensure that its members get first-rate treatment, Maxicare secured partnerships and affiliations only with the best of the best. There are approximately 450 hospitals and clinics that members can have access to. The company joined hands with 8,000 healthcare professionals who are specialists, fellows, and diplomates.

The standard benefits of out-patient and in-patient coverage is given premium with such efforts like setting up the Maxicare Primary Care Centers in major

SETTING/ B2-4

> 'Peace of mind is what we want for our members whenever they need medical care,' says Josephine Aguilar, SVP for marketing and sales. 'Members should just focus on getting well and we will take care of the rest'



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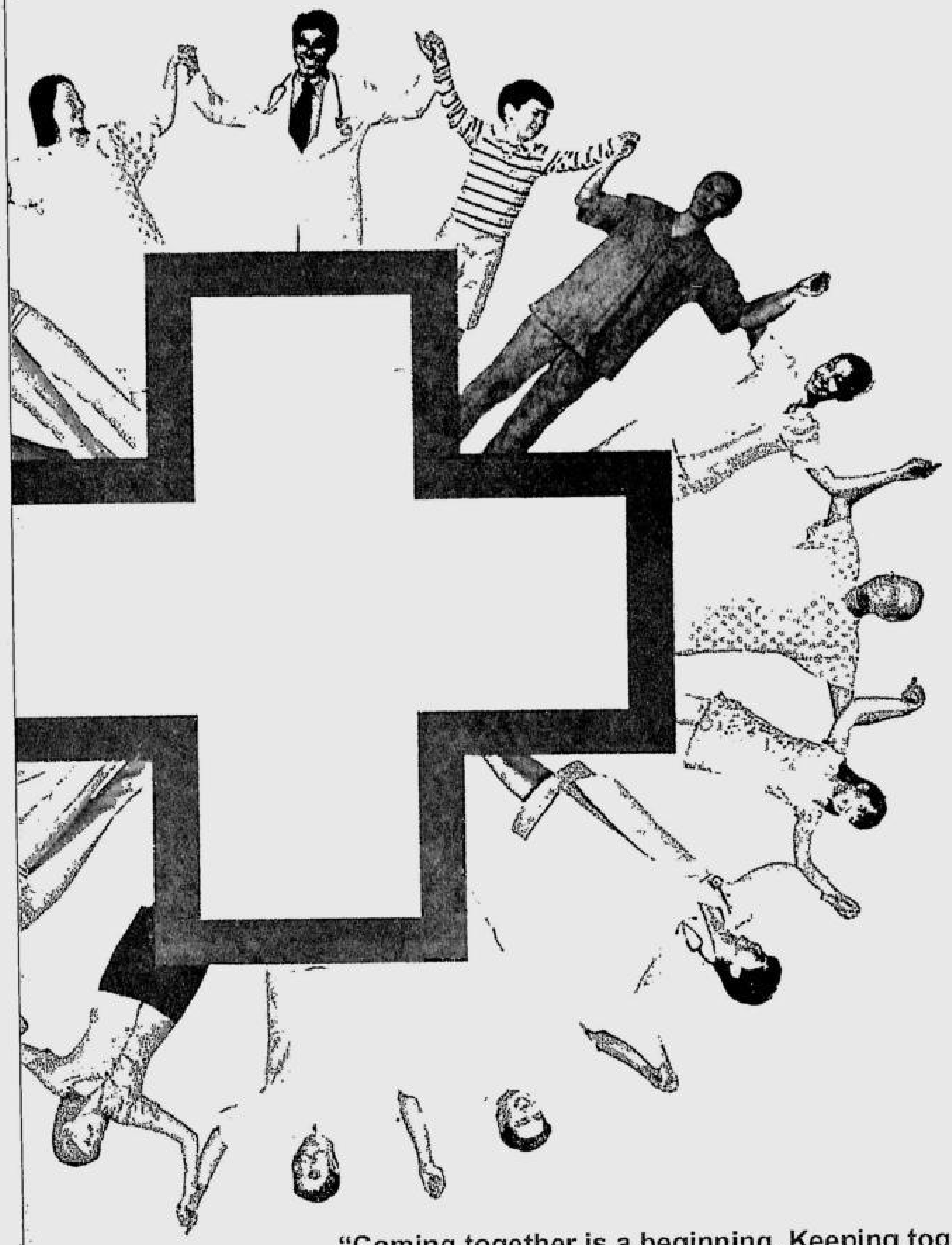

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Maxicare Healthcare Corp

Setting the standards in the managed care industry

From page B2-1

hospitals and in key cities nationwide. The almost 140 Customer Care Associates, the biggest in the industry, serve as a link to healthcare providers and members to make it convenient for them to avail themselves of their benefits.

"In our case, the reimbursement is less than one percent," Aguilar said. This happens only in rural areas where there are no accredited hospitals or doctors."

"And 99.9 percent of the members availing of their benefits use the Maxicare membership card," said Aguilar, "Which means it works effectively."

The inconvenience of having to worry about bills and paperwork is resolved with Customer Care Associates facilitating admission, visiting confined members in their rooms, given the rundown of their healthcare coverage, and making the hospital discharge hassle-free.

To further lessen the anxiety of members and dependents, Maxicare's 24/7 call center is open even during holidays. The center is manned by 30 call center personnel.

"In an HMO, the warm bodies do very well," Aguilar said of the advantages of the call center. "The question of a client can be a complication of things and an automated response would not be that customer-friendly for a member who needs immediate medical assistance."

Setting a standard

Over the years, the leading HMO prides itself for developing several innovations in the industry.

As an added convenience for member-patients, the company issues Maxicare intelligent cards that can give real-time validation of membership and benefits. Maxicare cards, be it Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze, can be swiped in designated POS systems in several affiliated hospitals. Again, this system lessens the anxiety and worry for members because it fast-tracks the transaction. This is most helpful in emergency cases during the wee hours of the morning.

"The hospitals don't have to call Maxicare just to check if you are still a bonafide member," Aguilar said. "Because in an emergency, things can't be slow and the treatment must be provided immediately."

Maxicare cards are personalized and are in effect for three to five years. Member companies need not change the membership card year after year. This is a lot of savings for both Maxicare and the corporate client. More than the savings, there is guaranteed peace of mind for the employees whose healthcare coverage would be continuous without going through another enrollment process.

This card can also provide customers and companies with a utilization report or the availment history of the members. It includes the consultation, diagnosis, amount, when it was used, and more. The company is using ICD 10 international coding system for its database.

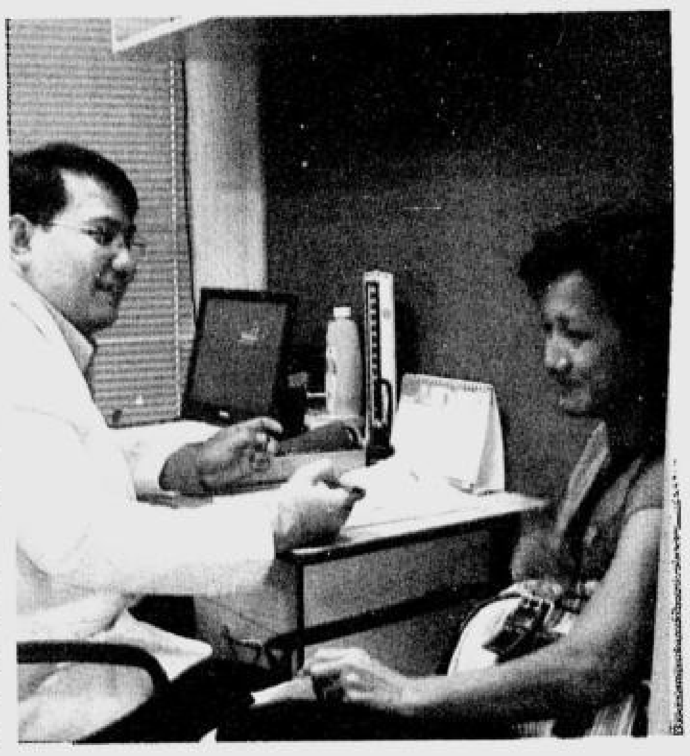
Its database management system is web-based. It means that wherever and whenever you are, whatever the weather condition is, the members are assured that they can get the pertinent data they need when using their Maxicare cards.

The impressive track record of Maxicare gives the members the luxury of peace of mind. Because it is a card system, and it is accepted in most hospitals, the percentage of reimbursements is very low.

Vote of confidence

"We take pride in Maxicare's brand of personalized service," Aguilar said. "For two decades now, we have seized every opportunity to serve and our value proposition is unparalleled."

Looking at the roster of its partner-companies, most of them are multinationals, from the banking sector, and other respected corporations from different industries. A number of them have been a partner for as long as Maxicare's existence. This shows that for 20 years, Maxicare has been delivering superior services and is the HMO of choice of the most prestigious companies operating in the country.



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'Beyond making money'

HEALTHCARE BENEFITS HAVE BECOME ONE OF THE main considerations in every company and its employees. The HMO (health maintenance organization) industry makes sure that there is a service for each market. The competition is becoming stiffer as more investments and new companies pour in the country. But for 20 years, Maxicare Healthcare Corp remained focused on its objective and created a niche market it has dominated since its inception.

Maxicare president Jose Pastor Z. Puno looks back at how the company met every challenge over the years and how they intend to continue and further improve the kind of service they are known for.

Q: Mr. Puno, Maxicare is now celebrating its 20th year. What does it mean to this organization to reach this milestone? And to you personally?

A: This celebration is very important especially for the people who have worked for the company for a long time. They value this milestone as a major achievement, especially in the context on how we started as a small company before and now blossoming into a major player in the industry. At the same time, this is a testament to the recognition of the HMO industry by the various companies and industries. Companies have started to be very conscious about providing healthcare to their people—that's why the business of HMOs has grown considerably. Personally, my satisfaction lies in providing healthcare even to a relatively small segment of society. If you think about it, it is the government that should be providing this service. But we can't entirely rely on the government. HMO companies have been providing healthcare for a certain segment of the society—mostly the employees of companies. But the number of employees has grown dramatically—so we are now servicing a good number. Most of the members of the HMO are really the working class. And this gives me satisfaction because I know how hard corporate employees work. They deserve to be cared for.

Q: What is the secret behind Maxicare's success throughout all these years?

A: I truly believe the first "secret" to our success is our people. Second, I'd have to say we have a strong and stable ownership that fully supports the company. It's our efficient manpower that has built up the reputation of the company. In fact, because of our well-trained staff, we are considered to be the top brand, the superbrand in the HMO industry. Of course, some people might think that because of this superbrand reputation, Maxicare is probably expensive. But really, with Maxicare, you get what you pay for. That's how I'd like to see it.

Q: In the past 20 years, you not only had to build the organization from ground up. You had to weather some amazing storms--the 1989 coup, the turbulent years that followed, the chaotic political environment, the 1997 financial crisis, a Presidential impeachment. How did you manage to pull through those rough times?

A: Well, like for instance, when you talk about the Asian Financial crisis, companies started experiencing difficulties - and one of the things they looked at was their healthcare / HMO costs. When they started cutting costs, companies looked at reducing manpower or reducing manpower benefits. So that was definitely a time for concern. There was definitely a negative impact in our business. But you know, in terms of actual dent on the volume, it was not so dramatic because it is also very difficult for an existing company to cut this type of benefit. It's not something that you can provide now, and then the next year, you tell your people that it's no longer available. So, in terms of drop because of the Asian crisis, it wasn't so drastic. I guess the ones that were really affected were the new businesses, those companies which just began providing this type of benefit--but not those companies who have been providing healthcare benefits for quite some time. As regards to the recent political instabilities, believe it or not, it doesn't have a direct impact in our business because whatever happens on the political front, you will still need medical services. The need for medical care is so basic now, like the way people would need food and shelter. So if there are, for example, some coup talks going on - or whenever there is political instability, at worst, there might be a temporary disruption in a certain area-but not that much. Also, if one is sick there are a lot of providers they can go to. For instance if Makati is not stable, they can actually go to providers in Quezon City. Now if it's dramatic issue on security, I think, based on experience, the dip in sales just happens for a couple of days. The actual volume, if you look at it, is not dramatically affected.

Q: That seems to understate your management skills. On a personal level how would you assess the impact of your management style on Maxicare's performance and achievements?

A: Well, I have an open door policy. So, I think people in the company feel comfortable talking to me. I think they are not hesitant to approach me anytime. I relate with them in a formal basis on some issues - but I also deal with them informally in certain times when the occasion calls

BEYOND/ B2-6

Happy 20th Anniversary

Maxicare

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'Beyond making money'

From page B2-5

for it. I go around the different areas to say hello to the people. I think even if you conduct a survey among our people, I think you will get the opinion from them that I can easily be approached. And the thing is I'm coming from my previous career as a banker where I was involved for a long time in marketing. For a long time, I was involved in marketing the services of the bank. And that required me dealing with a lot of people. Now it's exactly the same - but I'm now marketing a different product, healthcare. But I still have to relate with people, I still have to convince people that our product is the best in the industry. I have to convince them that they are looking at a very affordable product, reasonably priced. Now in terms of running this company and my management style, my background in the finance industry comes in very handy because I look at the financials all the time. I always look at how the business is going and the profitability of the company.

Q: What makes Maxicare different from other healthcare companies?

A: Number one is ownership. We have more stable, stronger ownership. Number two, I think, our main or senior officers could be considered to be among the best -- if not the best -- in the industry. They have been involved in the business for a long time. While our people are, on the average, very young. I think in terms of number of years of service, a lot of them have accumulated two years of service. And that makes them very efficient in what they do.

Q: How would you sum up the past 20 years in the context of the over-all business of Maxicare?

A: It started twenty years ago and at that time, HMOs were not well known among businesses. It took a while building the product as an important benefit to their employees. There were ups and downs along the way. There were years, in terms of profitability, it was difficult for some companies operating as HMOs. Also convincing the providers to go into cooperation with the HMO company, that took some time. Of course compare to the modern or more advanced countries, like the US, their HMO industry is far more developed. We are just following that course, Eventually, we hope, that a bigger portion of the population will be very conscious about healthcare through HMOs.

Q: You have mentioned about the people comprising the Maxicare organization, them being the core of Maxicare's success. What do you look for in a person before he becomes part of the Maxicare organization?

A: Different criteria because we are involved in the service business. Our main selling point would be how we provide the service and this is being taken cared of by our people through the cooperation of our providers. In terms of determining the qualifications, like for instance, if you talk about marketing people, we look at their experience. During interviews we evaluate how articulate they are, the kind of personality they have. At least they should have a positive or pleasing personality. When they approach people, the experience of the people they approach should be a pleasant encounter. They have to be intelligent to really understand the product because it's not a simple generic product that you sell. You have to actually formulate the product that will fit the requirements of your customers. Then when you talk about the other operating units, like finance, you look at the usual requisites, educational background and work experience. I think we offer very good compensation and benefits to our people - and that's why we get to hire the best.

Q: In your view, how different will the challenges be for the next 20 years, in comparison to the challenges you had the past 20 years?

A: The situation will become more competitive. The market will grow. More companies will be conscious of the need for providing healthcare benefits to their employees. It is also possible that some new players might come in. At present, the operators are substantially local. It is possible that maybe a foreign operator might come in and become interested with the situation here. So stiffer competition, and a bigger market is in the offing. We also see that the role of the HMO will become more important. And maybe even the volume of business of the hospitals with the HMOs will increase compared to the direct customers of the hospitals. That's how we foresee the challenges of the coming years.

Q: Do you think that scenario has already started to materialize?

A: Yes it has. In terms of market, corporate accounts are growing fast. As you know, in our economy right now, one of the highest growth industry would be the BPO industry, call centers. A lot of players in that business are multinationals and they are very conscious of the healthcare benefits because this is the situation in their home countries. So, it's automatic for these big players that healthcare is one of the biggest attractions to hold on to their employees. Aside from the BPO industry, the banking industry is also growing. They have been in this business and the population working in the financial industry is growing. So that's a big market for us.

Q: In connection with that, what is your greatest challenge now, as you celebrate your 20th year?

A: The biggest challenge is to be the best HMO and the most dominant. We want to be the leading HMO in the next 2 to 3 years. That means being number one in terms of revenue and in net profit.

Q: What new products, services, and developments can people expect from Maxicare in the next couple of years?

A: We are continuously trying to formulate products that will cater to the requirements of the market. This is a continuing effort. It would be best if everything will be standardized. But we know that we have to be flexible to cater to the requirements of some of our customers. For instance, we have been able to standardize our product for the individual, family, group (IFG). But in the corporate side, we really have to cater to each customer. We have to formulate and fit our product to their requirements.

Q: Where do you see Maxicare in the next 20 years?

A: We expect that our process will become better through automation. Even from the initial application stage, we would like to automate everything. We'd like to know exactly the situation of our members. For example, we'd like to get a monthly report on the status of availment. By automation, I mean everything--like doing the routine reports and other documentation. Of course the actual encounter with the customers has to be done by our people--but hopefully the backroom support can be addressed through automation to make it faster, more up-to-date.

Q: Any final word or message?

A: In our business, the ultimate satisfaction I get is seeing the benefit that we provide to our customers. You can compare it with the experience of doctors. Beyond money, when you see that you have provided the right healthcare to your members--and when you know that a substantial portion of our membership are the working class and their dependents who would probably would not have been able to avail of the medical service they need were it not for their healthcare coverage--that's the satisfaction I get. It's very rewarding to know that even ordinary employees of companies can easily go to their doctors, without worrying about the money they will have to spend. With this benefit, they are just like anybody who is wealthy who can afford medical care. That is the satisfaction that we really appreciate in this organization. And most of all, just like any doctor, when you see your patient going out of the hospital totally cured and doing well, that's the greatest feeling. So really, Maxicare is here not because of the money--but because we know we are contributing something positive to the country.

Still the Best @ 20

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WHAT'S INSIDE
Wade feels weird as 'Air Apparent' /A25

A REDEMPTORISTINE nun picks gherkins in their backyard in Legazpi.

The crunch, texture and flavor of the Red Nun's pickled gherkins are by far superior to those imported brands we spend a fortune on

KITCHEN RESCUE
Reggie Aspiras

Nuns find themselves in a fine pickle

HOLY GHERKINS! SOUNDS like a cool expression, doesn't it? In fact, it is one of our most frequently used expressions in La Union! *Sosyal kami*! Hahaha! Kidding!

But there really is such a thing!

Gherkins are known as *cornichons* in France. Young cucumbers picked and pickled when one to three inches in length. And there are many varieties.

I've tried many gherkins in my life but none met my want for crunch more than the Red Nun's pickled gherkins.

They are, for me, among the easiest pickle eats I've encountered. I can munch on them all day! The crunch, texture and flavor are by far superior to those imported brands we spend a fortune on.

Perhaps because they were formulated for our taste buds or because they were made by praying hands? They have the perfect sweetness and just the right amount of tartness.

Leave it to the sisters to adjust the recipe according to your preference. They have an excellent recipe for those who want it tarter as well. The rest of their crop they sell chopped up and turned to relish, for which they also have a special recipe.

It all began when a Redemptorist priest in Cebu started distributing cuttings of a particular gherkin variety. The Redemptoristine nuns then planted them in the fertile volcanic soil of their backyard in Legazpi. And the rest I leave to your imagination...

The gherkins flourished. So the next question was what to do with them.

Off to the kitchens they went, merrily experimenting with recipe after recipe. And, after 10 years, the result is the irresistible Red Nun Pickled Gherkins!

As contemplative religious, their time is devoted mostly to prayer. Sister May Raphael says, "We could not engage in hectic, demanding activities for a living—even for our most simple lifestyle! So what people donate for our products augments the alms, gifts and offerings for prayers we receive. We live by the religious rule of *Ora et Labora* (prayer and work) with health, balance, recreation, study and community living."

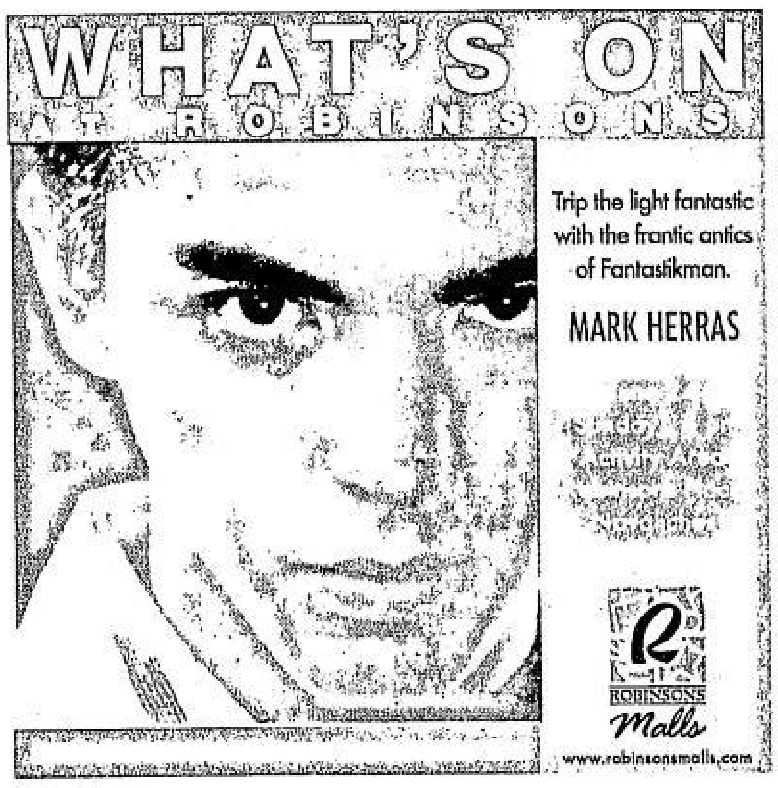
Each sister uses her own talent to contribute to the community. Some make cards, vestments, religious articles and little trinkets.

Others make quiche, lasagna and gourmet delicacies when orders are made. One makes fruitcakes for Christmas.

At the moment, these simple forms of liveli-

NUNS/ C2

SUPERIOR gherkins made with praying hands



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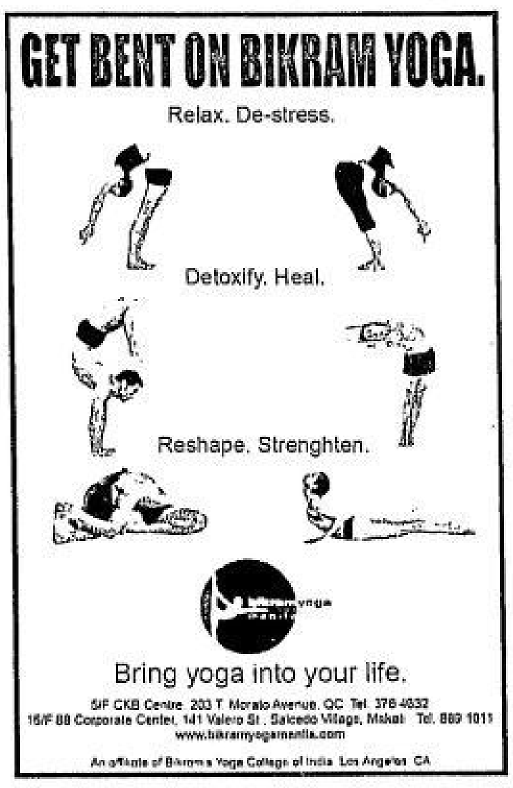

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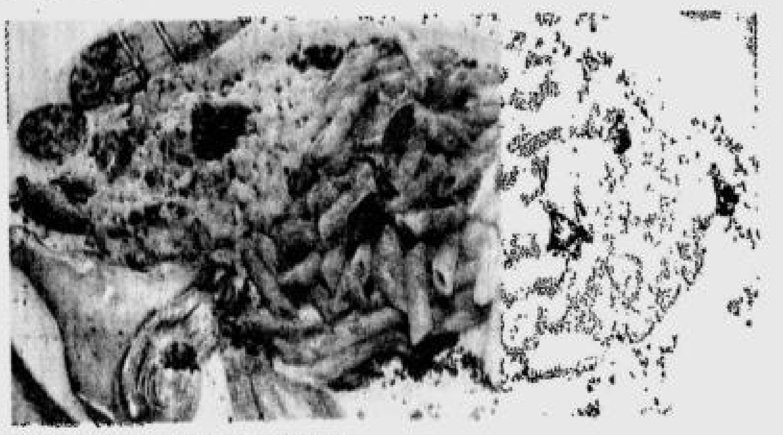


COLORFUL Penne Amatriciana

PESÇE Misto alla Brace is a seafood platter.

Pirates of Eastwood

Il Pirata is a colorful theme park serving authentic Italian cuisine

By Miguel Escaño
Contributor
Photos by August dela Cruz

SHIVER ME TIMBERS, MATEY.

Il Pirata, a pirate-theme restaurant in Eastwood City in Libis, lets you indulge your childhood fantasy of hoisting the Jolly Roger flag and searching for buried treasure.

Sail the high seas while feasting on authentic Italian cuisine redolent of exotic spices and infused with all the flavors of the Mediterranean.

Tianni Modica, the restaurant's general manager, said the original plan was to create in Manila Bay a floating restaurant that resembled a pirate ship. Achieving their initial vision was not easy so the Italian owners, while retaining the pirate concept, adapted the idea to a family restaurant setting.

A "PIRATE" keeps an eye on things in the second-floor bar.

"Il Pirata is a place where a family can eat together and the kids can enjoy themselves," said Modica. "The atmosphere is similar to a colorful theme park and the authentic Italian cuisine makes for hearty eating."

Pizza perfect

Italian cuisine, of course, means two things to most people: pizza and pasta. Chef Tijano Cavallini says the secret to good pizza is, first, in the quality of the dough, and second, in the way it is cooked.

In Italy, pizza is traditionally cooked in wood-fire ovens. This infuses the dough with the flavorful essence from the burning wood. Convenience has led to the use of electrical metal ovens.

But authenticity is what Il Pirata is all about so a wood-fire oven tempers the soft dough into golden-brown succulent pizza bursting with more flavor.

The restaurant's bestseller is Pizza del Pirata, which has four kinds of cheese, tomato sauce, spicy salami and imported sausage. Modica recommends Pizza Margherita, a traditional Italian favorite. It has tomato, mozzarella cheese and fresh basil.

Another excellent choice is Pizza Del Capitano, which has pesto sauce, fresh tomato, mozzarella cheese, arugola and parma ham.

ANTIPASTO di Salumi

CHEF Tijano Cavallini grills Steak Florentino.

Family restaurant

Il Pirata's interiors are designed like a ship's galley. Grinning skulls adorn the chairs and golden accents are everywhere. The second-floor ceiling has a gallery of rogues from Jack Sparrow pirates swinging in mid-air.

The expansive interiors can accommodate parties for large groups of people, the entire complex can accommodate some 160 people.

While dining, children are provided coloring materials and maps so they can "hunt" for treasures. A miniature ship outside the restaurant is being converted into a play area for kids.

Il Pirata Italian Restaurant is at Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City; tel. 4211994-95; fax 4211996; and website www.ilpiratamanila.com.

THE CONSUMER

Solon wants 'free' ATM use

By Linda B. Bolido

REP. JOSEPH SANTIAGO HAS CHALlenged local banks to make the use of automated teller machines (ATM) free.

Calling current fees "outrageous," Santiago asked banking regulators to find ways to let the country's more than 18 million ATM a cheaper alternative to the current system.

The lone representative of Catanduanes said, "A surcharge-free ATM network is absolutely achievable. In fact, in the United States, they already have such networks that now provide a growing number of consumers there meaningful relief from excessive access charges."

Santiago gathered figures showing that the over 18 million Filipinos were serviced mainly by three major networks, BancNet Inc., Megalink Inc., and ExpressNet Inc., consisting of 58 universal, commercial and thrift banks with over 5,800 ATMs.

He said historic low interest rates could prompt banks to augment fee-based income to compensate for less profitable lending activities.

He expressed concern that fees on ATM access, remittances and money transfers, among other fee-based services, could be raised.

Santiago said Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) had the power to initiate a new consortium for a surcharge-free ATM network.

"The BSP issues all kinds of licenses, including permits for new branches. They can use such powers to encourage a surcharge-free ATM network," he said.

Earlier Santiago cited BSP figures showing most banks charged ATM users who were clients of other banks P10-P12 per withdrawal and P1-P2 per balance inquiry.

Santiago has sponsored a bill seeking to prohibit banks from arbitrarily exacting "unjust and unwanted" service fees or penalty charges.

Lower interest rates

The Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI) Express Credit Classic has announced it would be charging cardholders, starting this quarter, 2.8 percent in interest, down from the current 2.9 percent. Later this year, the rate will drop further to 2.75 percent.

BPI also assured Express Credit cardholders there would be no hidden charges on installment purchases. They could also avail of deferred payment on regular buys. Each card has two separate credit lines—one for regular or straight purchases and another for installment.

BPI Express Credit cardholders also get zero-interest installment deals as well as discounts, perks and privileges from the bank's partner establishments.

Feedback

From garonunez@hotmail.com: "There have been few reasons to commend our planners ...but when something admirable comes around, we shouldn't deny our praises. I'm referring to the plan to extend LRT service to the airport."

But the writer said the LRT operator should not overlook some potential problems. "The Pasay Taft station where tourists would transfer to the Edsa line to go to Makati or Ortigas is rundown. The ticket booths are dingy... and passing through the Metro Point mall is an obstacle course of narrow, crowded corridors."

He said the stations should be transformed into something like the Shaw MRT station.

Similarly, the writer said Padre Faura station that served the Tourist Belt should also be improved, specifically expanded. The station, he said, was too cramped.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph.

Nuns find themselves in a fine pickle

From page C1

hood that they call small home craft are patronized primarily by friends who have tasted them.

Sister Mary Raphael adds that after I told her I wanted to feature them, she thought, "What could God's providence be telling us? Should we expand? That would need capital and we don't have that! We would need more workers and neither could we afford that. However, if it be God's will, these questions will resolve themselves."

Perhaps sister, this is why a bottle of those gherkins got to me through my friends Jenny and Imelda who brought them home from Legazpi. To let people know, so we could be of help.

God found a way once again!

For orders: 052-4809293, 0927-99992028. The Redemptoristine Monastery is in Barangay 38, Gogon, Legazpi City. Order the gherkins! They are fantastic! The nuns will mail their gherkins to Manila. Of course, the cost of freight will be added to the price.

MONIN Syrup

Would-be bar owner

I am Bong. I am thinking of putting up a small bar by the university belt. I want mine to be different from the others that just serve regular drinks. In doing my bar rounds to see what others have, I came across different flavored drinks. Fruit-flavored margarita, martini and sodas. Can you help me make them? This is my first venture using my hard-earned savings from my stint abroad. I hope you could help me.

I sure can. I am referring you to Rommel of Monin Syrups (0918-9701766). Their syrups are not just for cocktail drinks but are excellent for culinary and pastry preparations as well.

The company is a recipient of the Grand Prize in the European Excellence Award for perfection in product production in the Food & Beverage division, sharing the same distinction and prestige enjoyed by Piaget, Omega, Rolls-Royce, Jaguar, Mercedes Benz etc.

Rommel was kind enough to share their recipes with us. I tried a couple of these during the Philippine Team's victory party and they rocked!

Good luck, Bong! May all your dreams come true and flourish!

Margarita

60 ml Tequila Gold, 30 ml Monin syrup of choice (suggested: kiwi, watermelon, lychee, mango)

Freshly squeezed lime 30 ml, Blended ice, 1 scoop

- Pour and mix all ingredients in a blender.
- Blend until smooth.
- Set the Margarita glass with salt and sugar on the rim.
- Pour Margarita into glass.
- Garnish in relation to color or flavor.

More recipes next week!

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph.

The month of the French

THE INTERCONTINENTAL MANILA goes French this June.

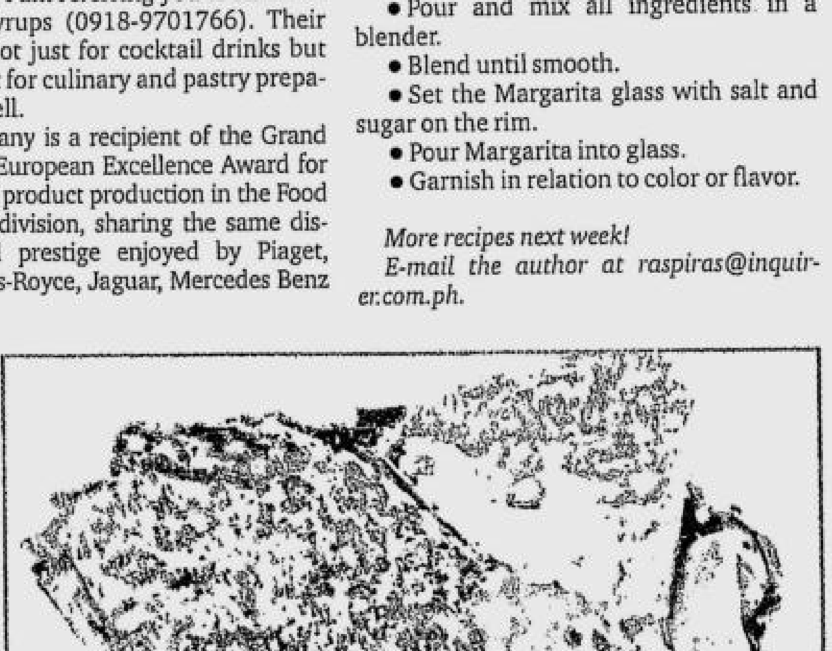
The Prince Albert Rotisserie has a special a la carte menu of French asparagus dishes. Executive chef Patrick Fournes combines French asparagus with other interesting ingredients.

Menu items include Shitake and Asparagus Casserole with Lemon and Garden Thyme Jus, Warm Asparagus with Green Marsala Sauce, Chilean Sea Bass and Asparagus with Green Parmesan Crumbs and Maltaise Orange Sauce and Roasted rack of Lamb with Dry Nuts Sauce, Asparagus, and Garlic Croquettes.

Spend a relaxing evening with friends at the Gambrinus Bar while enjoying a wide array of French wines and cheeses and live entertainment. This French gourmet eat-as-much-as-you-can offer is available daily 5:30-8:30 p.m. the entire month (tel. 8159711).

HEARTY JAPANESE MEALS

Eastwood City's Ebisu Restaurant serves Japanese dishes inspired by the Meiji period at prices within everybody's reach. The restaurant features a sushi bar serving all-you-can-eat sushi for only P288++. Tables on the upper level have Yakiniku grills where you can cook fresh beef, chicken and vegetables. The Ebisu Chicken Special is crunchy slices of lightly breaded teppanyaki chicken breast marinated in soya sauce and sprinkled with coins of fried fresh garlic. Ebisu is at 2/F, Citywalk 2, Eastwood City. Call 6871071 or 6877806; text 0917-8EWCITY.



Demo on new Asian cooking

FILIPINO-HAWAIIAN GUEST chef Rogelio Aglibot will showcase his delicious take on innovative Asian cuisine in a special cooking class at 10 a.m., June 23, at Makati Shangri-La's Red Restaurant.

Lunch and cooking demo is priced at P1,800.

Aglibot will be the guest chef June 22-30 at Red (tel. 8400884 or 8138888 ext. 7588/7599).

The chef, who says his parents are his early culinary mentors, draws inspiration from his ethnic roots. He refined his ideas through his formal French training and experience.

He has been hailed by critics for his imaginative and playful menus that read like a storybook of nostalgic food, memories from his childhood and travels. Aglibot has acquired a loyal following for his soulful pan-Asian flavors and is considered one of the West Coast's most important chefs of Asian cuisine. His visit to the Philippines is courtesy of Universal Motors Corporation.

CHEF Rogelio Aglibot

A pair-fect adventure

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL STAGING at the Glorietta Activity Area, the Nestlé Koko Krunch Duo Pair-fect Adventure moves June 23-24 to the Ayala Center, Cebu.

The Glorietta event was attended by some 25,000 kids and parents. Kids and their Duo Buddies entered the adventure area through the Taser Tunnel for a world of excitement brought by the new Nestlé Koko Krunch Duo that mixes white chocolate cereal and the original chocolate Koko Krunch.

Kids had fun at the Koko Duo Double Dive and Double Dare.

In the afternoon, Karel Marquez hosted a high-energy live show that featured the cast of Trumpets led by Sam Concepcion and the Nestlé Breakfast Cereals mascots, including Koko.

Nestlé Koko Krunch Duo is now available in 170-g medium packs in supermarkets nationwide.

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

Ilocano on my father's side

EVERY SUNDAY AFTER COMING from the market, my second son passes by Carling's Restaurant in Quezon City to get his dose of Ilocano *kilawing kalding* and *papaitan*.

Kilawin is mostly cleaned and charcoal-broiled skin, meat and liver of goat, marinated in *calamansi* and mixed with ginger and onions, flavored with soy sauce and salt. *Papaitan* is boiled entrails, the broth flavored with bile.

This column may be days late for Father's Day but watching my son relish his purchase reminds me of my father.

My father used to do that, pass by Carling's for his Ilocano food fix. It's a pity he is no longer around to share the pleasure with his grandson.

My son is waiting for me to bring him to the Ilocos, beyond his *lolo*'s home province, La Union. He knows he will sample the varied cuisine I tasted during my many sorties there to research and to holiday.

A ROADSIDE *empanada* stand in Ilocos Norte

Tastiest soup

In Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Gloria Castillo, the cook at the Quema house, made the tastiest soup I ever had. The main ingredients were shells, as small as rice grains, called *ngarosangis*. They were boiled, the flavors carried by the broth and the shells discarded without being opened because that was impossible to do.

I tasted the *empanada* in Vigan, Laoag and on the road to Pagudpud, each crust tinted a bright orange. Within, a whole egg enfolded simple *mongo* sprouts or cabbage and, for a bit more luxury, some *chorizo*.

The *empanada* is best eaten right after frying because the crunch and goodness disappear immediately.

Going to Ilocos gives you a perspective of the land, the climate and the people, valuable information when you try to discern what makes for the cuisine.

But much of Ilocano cuisine I had was cooked quite near to our Metro Manila home, at houses of friends.

Juliet Lazo Rivera cooked *miki* for me. There was boiling broth in a *caldero* that contained a rich mixture of chopped shrimps, beef and chicken flavored with juice from crushed chicken bones and *bagoong isda*, and colored by *achuete*. She added homemade noodles that thickened the soup and then added *kutsay* leaves for color and aroma.

Soup and 'tasty'

Juliet's househelp told me that in her hometown of Batac, fiesta would always have this hearty soup eaten with "tasty" (*pan Amerikano* or sliced bread).

Dinendeng was also demonstrated, a very simple dish carrying so many secrets. Juliet showed me how the eggplants were first skinned then sliced into thin strips.

Ilocanos say any available vegetable will be thrown in next like *patola*, *bataw* and green beans. What was important, Juliet said, was not to cover the *dinendeng* while cooking to preserve the color of the vegetables and prevent overcooking.

Then there's the *bagoong* of fermented *munamon* (*dilis*, anchovy), placed into the water and boiled. Cubed *kamote* is added for its sweet taste. Simple food with a lot of flavor and rather healthy. Up north, *dinendeng* is breakfast food.

Another version of *dinendeng* was cooked for me by Terry Antiporda, invited by good friend Baby de la Cruz. *Malunggay* pods were used, my first time to know that those elongated, slim tamarind-like pods were edible.

He advised that the *bagoong isda* be strained first then boiled for some time to take away the fishy taste. The *malunggay* pods also have to be boiled for some 10 minutes because they take a long time to cook. Properly done, the pods will have a sweetish taste to them.

Terry also cooked the Ilocano version of *batchoy* called *yusi*. Pieces of pork tenderloin, liver and other innards were put in the broth after which *kutsay* leaves were added for color and aroma.

It would not be *yusi*, however, without the *gamet*, a dark seaweed similar to the Japanese *nori* used to wrap certain sushi dishes.

Expensive treat

Gamet is a rare treat for Ilocanos. Every sheet costs an arm and a leg so, not surprisingly, Ilocanos use it sparingly, adding it to scrambled eggs the way the French do with truffles, to flavor and also to upgrade such an ordinary dish.

I also do my tasting when Ilocano festivals come to town. One such festival gave me a taste of *hantik*, fruit-tree ant eggs that looked like legumes.

The Ilocano trait of waste-not-want-not probably explains why other insects such as crickets, queen ants, beetles and grasshoppers are considered delicacies.

That festival was where I was introduced to what looked oddly like balls of *sisig*. They turned out to be *dinacdacan*.

Designer Danny de la Cuesta, a good cook himself and an Ilocano, told me that the dish's nickname was "highball." *Dinacdacan* is made of ox face and the finishing touch is mayonnaise that makes the small meat pieces stick together.

And, while pickled fruits could be found in regional cuisine, it was at that festival where I learned that the collective Ilocano name for those was *inartem*. While the Indian mango and the *singkamas* were familiar, it was a delight to be introduced to the small yellow tomato called *karamay*.

I hope my son will have the same opportunity to taste more of Ilocano cooking whether here or up north. And I do feel my father's pleasure in the appreciation of his region's cuisine by both his grandson and his daughter.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04 @yahoo.com.

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June 23—Modern Filipino Buffet (special class, great for entertaining, all new)—Adobo Crostinis with Mango Jam, Barquillos Sticks served with Choice of Paté or Salmon Caviar Cream; soup: Best-ever Seafood Molo with Condiments; salad: Mixed Greens with Sampalok Dressing; pasta: Garlic and Vigan Longanisa, Prawn in Aligue Cream; main course: Lemon grass-infused Spit-roasted Lechon de Leche; Oven-roasted Hanging Tender Slab Marinated Lechon-Baka Style; Tinapa Rice Pilaf; dessert: Homemade Gourmet Halo-Halo topped with Homemade Ube Ice Cream

June 25 (homemade flavored pasta, all new)—The Secret Is the Flavored Noodle: Fresh Prosciutto Noodles in Mushroom Pea Cream Sauce; Mushroom Noodles with Parmesan Butter Sauce; Black Pasta with Mixed Seafood in Toasted Garlic Olive Oil; Mixed Herb Pasta with Scallops in Saffron Cream; Blue Cheese Noodles with Grilled Chicken; Chocolate Pasta with Mascarpone Strawberry Cream

June 27—Prichon Done My Way: Crisp Fried Lechon de Leche Done My Way, Served Peking Duck Style with Homemade Flavored Pancakes and 12 sauces.

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YES, YOUR KIDS CAN ACHIEVE THEIR BEST THIS SCHOOL YEAR!

With the summer days quickly passing by, it won't be too long before the school year comes rolling back in! But it need not be a gloomy reminder of the usual school routine. As illustrated by up and coming celebrities (and full-time students) Carla Humphries, Johanna "Kiray" Celis, Miles Ocampo, Michael Flores and star athlete Chris Tiu, the school experience is one of the most rewarding periods in a young person's life.

Eighteen-year old ABS-CBN talent, Carla Humphries didn't have to wait to graduate from the Center for International Education, where she studies Entrepreneurship. With the help of her father, an entrepreneur himself, Carla now has her own brokerage account and is taking advantage of her course to further her business skills. In spite of Carla's showbiz demands, school remains a top priority. Like Carla, young people need not compromise their interests outside school-whether it's a part-time job, a small business or a hobby-for as long as they know their priorities. "Know you priorities by weighing things," says Carla, who often turns to her parents for advice. "And listen to your parents because they can help you figure out your problems." Who knows, maybe that small jewelry business that your budding entrepreneur does in her spare time could be the start of a bigger venture!

Blue Eagles star player Chris Tiu's hectic training schedule was never a hindrance to completing one of the college's most distinguished (and challenging) courses: Management Engineering. "All it takes is a lot of focus," explains Tiu. "With tough professors and during times when we lose our basketball games, I remind myself to focus even more." In addition to schoolwork and basketball trainings, he also managed to fulfill his duties as a member of the Sangunniang Kabataan. Tiu and other top management students made an impressive contribution to their college as well by setting up an in-campus mall that featured various establishments.

For young stars, Miles Ocampo and Kiray Celis of the show, Going Bulilit and Michael Flores of Super Inggo, TV work did not get in the way of their education. Miles' sweet demeanor on and off the set landed her an initial stint in the Bibbo Hotdog commercials. On the other hand, 11-year old Kiray, who began her TV career on the show, Magandang Tanghali Bayan with Willie Revillame at the tender age of 3, is successfully being home-schooled to accommodate a busy work schedule. With her natural knack for humor, Kiray charms both on-screen and off. For Michael, his popularity continues to grow even as he continues to pursue his education at San Vicente School.

With a lot of great experiences to look forward this school year, Metrobank Credit Card is the perfect companion for all the academic requirements needed for a fulfilling year of learning! From enrollment fees to sports equipment, books to cultural trips, Metrobank Credit Card's Cash2Go Beat Installment Plan provides fast cash at a minimum transaction of PHP3,000, with low-interest monthly payments, to help with all those school expenses so your kids can get the most out of their education and be the best that they can be this year!

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SAUMON Marine

It's French fiesta time

By Linda B. Bolido

RED Snapper done the Nice way

SPRING HAS SPRUNG—IN FRANCE AND THE rest of the northern hemisphere, that is.

And, as has been their tradition, the French are bringing the celebration of the rebirth and renewal of nature all over the world, even to the Philippines, which has only two seasons to speak of—hot and hotter.

Filipinos may not quite understand the jubilance over a change of season but they sure can relate to the way the French mark *printemps*—with cultural shows and, needless to say, food. After all, that is what local fiestas are all about—feasting.

With a cuisine celebrated throughout the world, the French can do no less. For this year's spring fete, Sofitel Philippine Plaza and Alliance Française take Filipinos on a journey through France's gastronomic centers that is designed to awaken and excite the five senses—touch, sight, sound, taste and smell.

Une Odyssée Culinaire a Travers la France (A French Culinary Odyssey), ongoing until June 24, gives diners at Sofitel's Spiral a glimpse of the regions of Bretagne, Provence, Franche-Comte and Dauphine through their distinctive cuisine.

Gastronomic centers

In a press handout given during a preview of the spring feast, Sofitel said: "The regions were chosen because of their strong culinary character, feeling and emotion."

Bretagne is credited with "inventing" crêpes while Provence boasts of the bold flavors of the Mediterranean. Franche-Comte and Dauphine are known for their sausages.

The press preview was attended by, among others, Sofitel's Bern Schneider, general manager; Rose Libongco, director of marketing; Christian Werdenberg, executive chef; and Ramiro Sitjar, executive sous chef; and Alliance Française's Olivier Dintinger, director; and Marie Weckerle, cultural officer.

Bretagne will be the featured cuisine for lunch today. Provençal dishes will be in the spotlight for dinner today and lunch tomorrow.

Dinner tomorrow will feature Franche-Comte cooking while lunch on June 23 will be a showcase of Dauphine dishes. Dinner on Saturday and lunch and dinner on Sunday will feature all four regional cuisine.

Diners can participate in cooking demonstrations at Spiral's Mediterranean section using the cookware brand Tefal's Jamie Oliver line. Lucky guests can win Tefal cookware and gift certificates from Total during the festival.

Naturally, the French food festival will also be a showcase of wines and other beverages, as well as cheeses, that France is known for.

Also getting into the spirit of the French spring fete are Le Bar, which offers French champagne and jazz music 6 p.m.-1 a.m. everyday; and Galette, the French patisserie, that will be showcasing treats from award-winning pastry chef Hervé le Clanche who was brought in by Sofitel specially for this occasion.

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Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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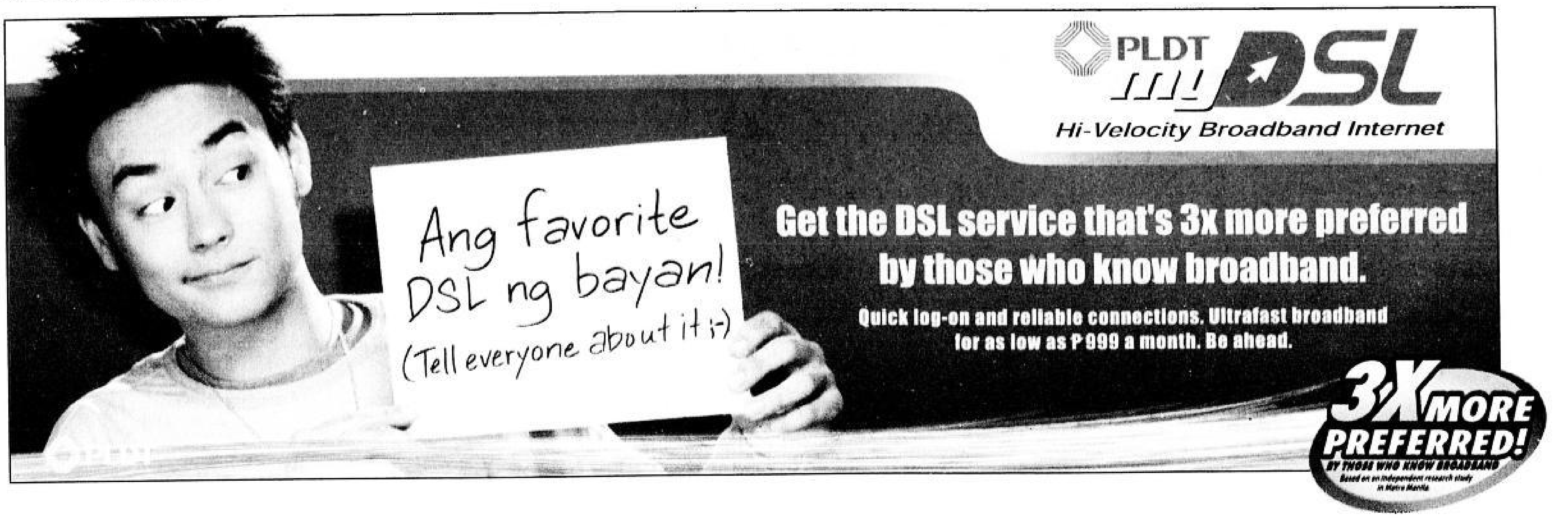
INSIDE

Comedian's 'secret' daughter Dollywood/D6

Kris Aquino's risky moves Viewfinder/D3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Don't pull that plug

By Marinel R. Cruz

DON'T PULL THE PLUG ON THE COmatose Philippine film industry.

This was the battle cry of representatives from four major industry stakeholders that convened yesterday to formulate a "development plan" for the "survival" of the movie industry.

Top officials of the Independent Film Cooperative, Film Academy of the Philippines, Directors' Guild of the Philippines and Nagkakaisang Manggagawa ng Pelikulang Pilipino signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that would formulate an industry "road map."

A press briefing was held at the Newsdesk Café in Quezon City, organized by the Fair Trade Alliance (FTA), a broad multi-sectoral coalition of formal and informal labor, industry, agriculture, nongovernment organizations and youth "pushing for trade and economic reforms."

"The road map or development plan will contain guidelines on what the stakeholders and the government should do to help improve the movie industry," explained FTA Secretariat Catherine Manzano.

Manzano added that the convention focused on the reduction of amusement taxes, conditions that spelled out the need for road-mapping and a report on the series of stakeholders' meetings that began in February 2007.

How it started

A research group—to be headed by the FTA Secretariat—will be formed to gather data for the road map. The Film Institute of the University of the Philippines will participate in data collection, Manzano added.

"The initiative began early this year when the FAP approached us for assistance," Manzano told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview on Tuesday. "The FTA focuses on campaigns on trade and economy. Since the film industry contributes to national economy, we decided to heed the FAP's call."

She added that, in the stakeholders' previous meetings, two problems were identified: Lack of funding support and lack of governance and direction.

"Upon closer analysis, it becomes evident that the industry's problem is more than just the lack of technology or the inability of local films to catch up with global trends," Manzano noted. "The industry's problems are heightened by taxes. The government is raking in more than it bargained for from an industry it doesn't even consider as one."

Manzano pointed out that tax collected from movies are designed to upgrade equipment, conduct training and implement programs aimed at developing the industry and its workers. It is also meant to ensure the welfare of movie workers.

"There is a need to reassess policies governing the film industry, and develop an industry plan aimed at sustaining its growth," Manzano stressed.

FUN, FUN
It's a happy night and (clockwise from left) Tessie Tomas, Timmy Cruz and Margie Moran-Floirendo sing, dance and laugh at the Big Dome. Story in Review, page D6.

ANTONIO Meloto, Gawad Kalinga founder, with PDI chair Marixi Prieto, a staunch supporter, at the "Paraiso" premiere. RUDY ESPERAS

A village for RP movies' homeless coming soon

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IT DOES TAKE A VILLAGE.

Since 2005, Boots Anson-Roa, as Movie Workers Welfare Fund executive director, has been trying to start a low-cost housing project for movie workers.

After attempts to collaborate with Pag-Ibig Fund fell through, Anson-Roa thought of teaming up with Gawad Kalinga, a much-awarded nongovernmental organization founded by Antonio Meloto.

'Bayanihan'

"But even before I could get in touch with GK, I received a call two months ago from [TV executive] Bobby Barreiro who told me about GK's plan to work with Mowelfund," Roa says.

For his part, Barreiro, one of the executive producers of the GK film "Paraiso: Tatlong Kuwento ng Pag-Asa," notes, "Members of the film industry helped us make this movie. They volunteered their services free of charge. It was the *bayanihan* spirit in action."

Barreiro reveals that actress Maricel Soriano not only waived her fee, she also donated her cash prize from the game show "Deal or No Deal" to GK.

Equally supportive were the film's other lead stars Michael V and Cesar Montano. Reports Barreiro: "We kept asking, but Michael never responded to our questions about his fee. Cesar said he would rather build villages for GK than spend on his senatorial campaign."

The movie folks' overwhelming show of support inspired Meloto to give back to the industry, says Barreiro who instantly thought of Mowelfund.

"The *bayanihan* spirit has come full circle," Barreiro asserts. "The industry helped us make this film and GK is now helping Mowelfund build a village for movie workers who don't have their own homes."

Barreiro says the 800 sq. m. lot on which the Mowelfund Village will rise is a personal donation from Boots Anson-Roa and husband Pete Roa.

"The lot is near the boundary of Marikina and San Mateo, 45 minutes away from Quezon City," says Anson-Roa. "We bought the property in the 1970s." She adds that Mowelfund is choosing between two plans: 20 bungalows or three-level condo buildings.

She explains: "The plan for the condo can yield 39 units at 24 sq. m. each. Apart from the

A VILLAGE/ D4

'Before you complain...'

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—IGOROT composers and recording artists should file copyright registrations of their original compositions before they can complain of infringement.

National Library copyright division chief Vir Arriero made this statement in a meeting with the members of the Cordillera Producers and Recording Artists Association (CPRAA) at the Benguet State University on Friday.

He said only local artists whose works are registered are entitled to protection. The copyright office issues "covered" artists certificates that serve as license for law enforcement agencies to conduct raids on shops selling pirated copies of their work, he said.

With the certificates, Arriero added, the police can confiscate the pirated copies even without a search warrant issued by the court. "Without it, you will always be vulnerable to piracy," said the copyright official.

Brisk sales

Benito Garcia, CPRAA president, earlier complained of the rampant piracy of Igorot audio and video recordings, which, he said, has severely undermined their profits and recovery of production costs.

He said the sale of pirated copies was brisk here, as well as in Buguias and Mankayan towns in Benguet, in Bontoc, Mt. Province, and in Baguio City.

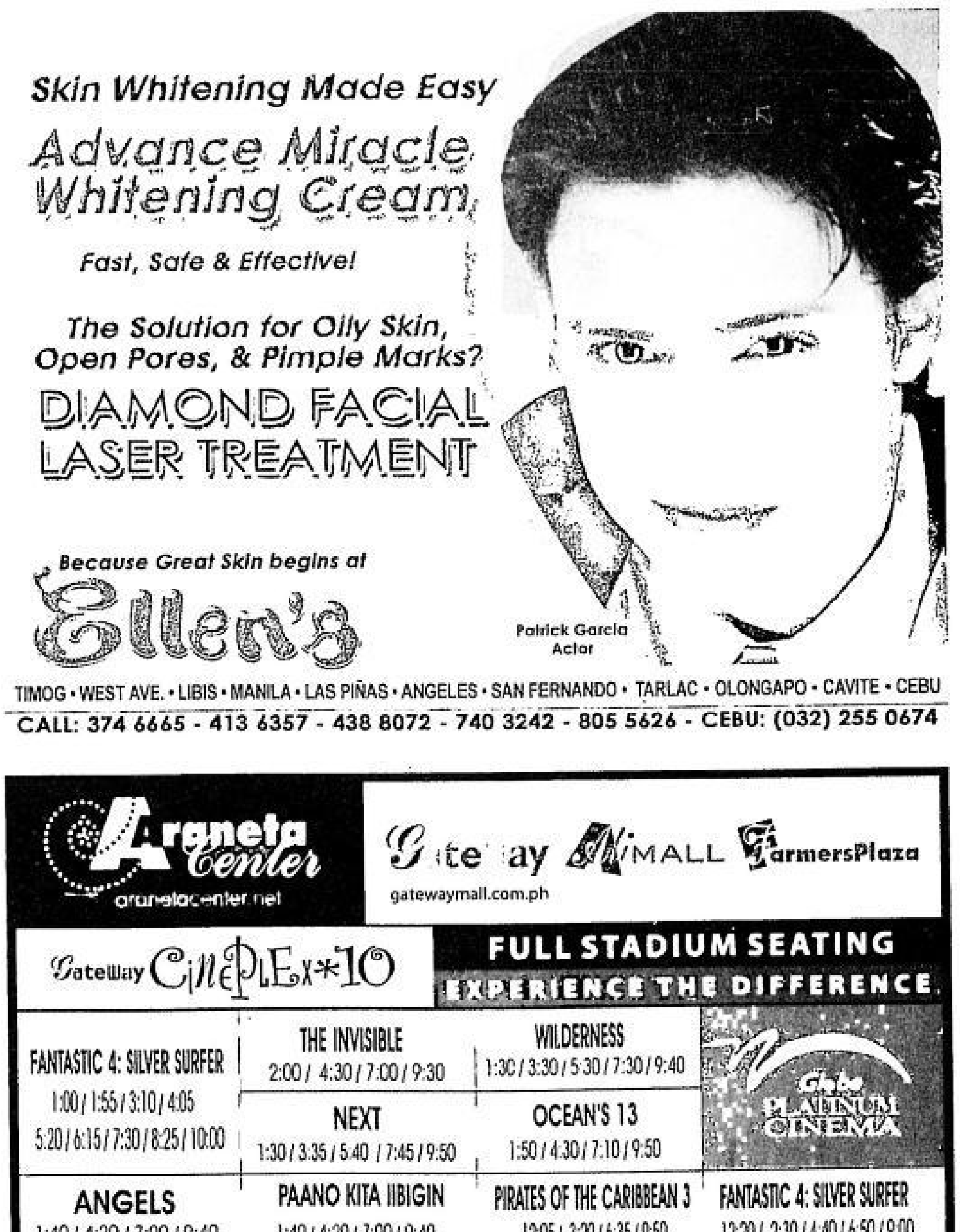
The group has 22 members—Igorot singers, producers and producer-singers.

Nardo Dongpoen, a local artist and composer, said production costs range from P70,000 to P80,000 per album. He said original CDs and VCDs are sold at P150 each, cassettes at P120. Pirated copies are sold at P35 to P80, cassettes, at P50.

Arriero advised the local artists to acknowledge the international artists and recording companies of their adaptations.

Adaptations are locally recorded musical pieces of an established tune, mostly foreign, whose lyrics are in the dialect (Kankanaey, Ibaloi or Ilocano), the local dialects.

Among the locals' favorites are the songs of foreign artists Alan Jackson, George Strait, Merle Haggard, Glen Campbell and Conway Twitty.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7 NEXT
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'Pretty Woman's' 3rd

LOS ANGELES—HOLLYWOOD screen idol Julia Roberts has given birth to her third child, the actress's representatives said Monday.

The Oscar-winning star of "Pretty Woman" and "Erin Brockovich" gave birth to a baby boy, Henry Daniel Moder, at a Los Angeles hospital on Monday, New York-based publicists Engelman and Company confirmed.

Roberts, 39, and husband Danny Moder, 38, a cinematographer—married in July 2001—already have two-year-old twins, Hazel and Phinnaeus.

The highest-paid Hollywood actress, who commands up to $25 million per picture, has taken a break from acting in recent years. Her last live-action appearance was in 2004's "Ocean's 12."

She will next be seen in Afghanistan war drama "Charlie Wilson's War" alongside Tom Hanks later this year. *AFP*

CHEER FACTOR

Coveted invitation

LOS ANGELES—Jennifer Aniston and Daniel Craig were among 115 people who have been invited to join the ranks of voters for the movie world's most sought after prizes, the Oscars, a statement said Monday.

Craig, best known for playing British super spy James Bond in "Casino Royale," and "Friends" star Aniston were among several actors invited to become voting members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Best Supporting Actress Oscar-winner Jennifer Hudson and fellow "Dreamgirls" star Eddie Murphy were also invited to join, along with "Little Miss Sunshine" funnyman Steve Carell, an Academy statement said. *AFP*

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FANTASTIC FOUR: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER G 12:20,2:30,4:40, 6:50,9:00	OCEAN'S THIRTEEN PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	FANTASTIC FOUR: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER G 1:20,3:30,5:40, 7:50,10:00

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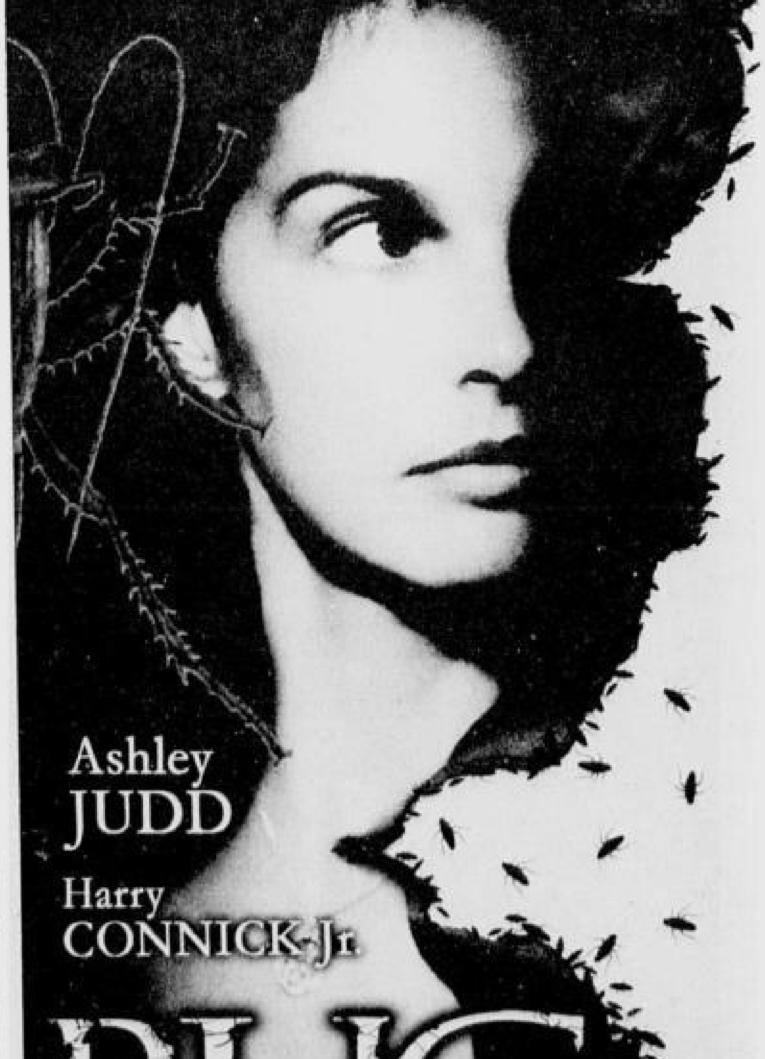
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE EXORCIST"



New hosting options for Kris, who's making a comeback

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST JUNE 11, **KRIS AQUINO** returned to television after her maternity leave. Her comeback program of choice was the new season of "Deal or No Deal." Coincidentally, or even ironically, the contestants were Kris' replacement on "The Buzz," **Ruffa Gutierrez**, and Ruffa's mother **Annabelle (Rama)**.

Kris looked good, if a bit heftier than usual, and handled the game show with her characteristic energy and liveliness. Interestingly, however, the usually diverting Ruffa and Annabelle were relatively sedate—and, dare we say it, dull. So, Kris had her work cut out for her to keep the show fairly humming along.

Another dampener was the contestants' relatively bad luck, with the big cash amounts playing themselves out early in the game. Still, Ruffa and Annabelle ended up winning some P250,000 for their charity beneficiary.

"Dear or No Deal" telecasts weeknights on Channel 2, and the hope is that subsequent contestants will be more interesting than its new season's *buena mano* players. For our part, however, we still can't warm up all that much to the show, since it's based mainly on luck and not on skill and gamesmanship.

Evaluation

Now that Kris is back on TV, it should be instructive to evaluate her prospects for renewed success as a program host. First off, her decision to no longer host "The Buzz" and "Game Ka Na Ba?" could be quite risky, because it deprives her of the major exposure that those two popular shows afforded her.

But Kris made the risky decision to stop hosting "The Buzz" so her weekends could be kept free for her burgeoning family. She should be complimented for choosing family over popularity, but it's likely that she won't "sacrifice" her high-flying career, and fully intends to have her cake and eat it, too.

To make that happen, she will soon unveil her new morning show with Boy Abunda, plus a third program to be telecast in the evening.

So, Kris will still end up with three TV shows, sustaining her status as one of the local TV screen's most visible on-cam personalities.

On the *other* hand, the risky aspect of Kris' comeback remains, because it's much more difficult to successfully launch new shows than to resume hosting programs that are already popular.

So, Kris will have her work cut out for her to make sure that her new programs will at least match the popularity of the shows she's chosen to give up.

Big question

That'll take a lot of doing, but ABS-CBN has the machinery to make that happen—as long as the new shows feel "right" for Kris and her unique mix of hosting skills.

The "Boy and Kris" show appears to be a potential hit, because the two hosts enjoy each other's company and work well together.

They are also interesting on point of contrast, with Kris coming across as the wellborn girl who's learned how to connect with the *masa*, while Boy is the "poor" boy from the Visayas who's pulled himself up the social and show biz ladder.

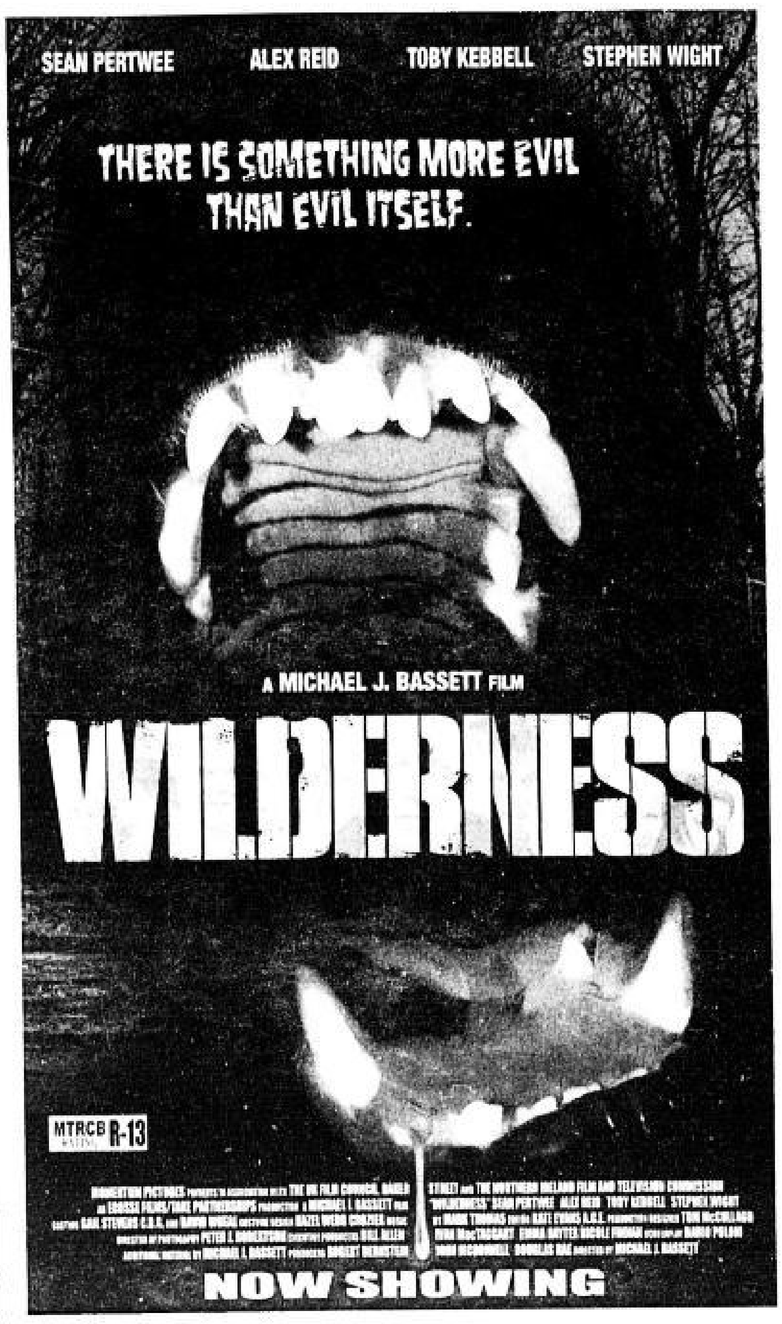
The big question mark is Kris' third, solo show, which should be judiciously conceptualized to provide greater variety to her hosting career. *Abangan*.

In all of these new projects, we trust that Kris can learn from past mistakes, focus more on her guests and contestants, and give her vaunted preference for brand names, personal references and private asides a wide berth.

'My December'

Kelly Clarkson's third album, "My December," will be released on June 25. Its first single, "Never Again," has made it to the Top 10 on Billboard's Hot 100. Produced by Grammy winner **David Kahne**, Clarkson's new album is her most personal—she's written or co-written all its tracks.

Cuts include the funky "One Minute," the confessional "Sober," the soulful "Be Still," the cheeky "Chivas" and the "full-throttle" "Haunting."


SEAN PERTWEE
ALEX REID
TOBY KEBBELL
STEPHEN WIGHT
THERE IS SOMETHING MORE EVIL THAN EVIL ITSELF.
A MICHAEL J. BASSETT FILM
WILDERNESS
MTRCB R-13
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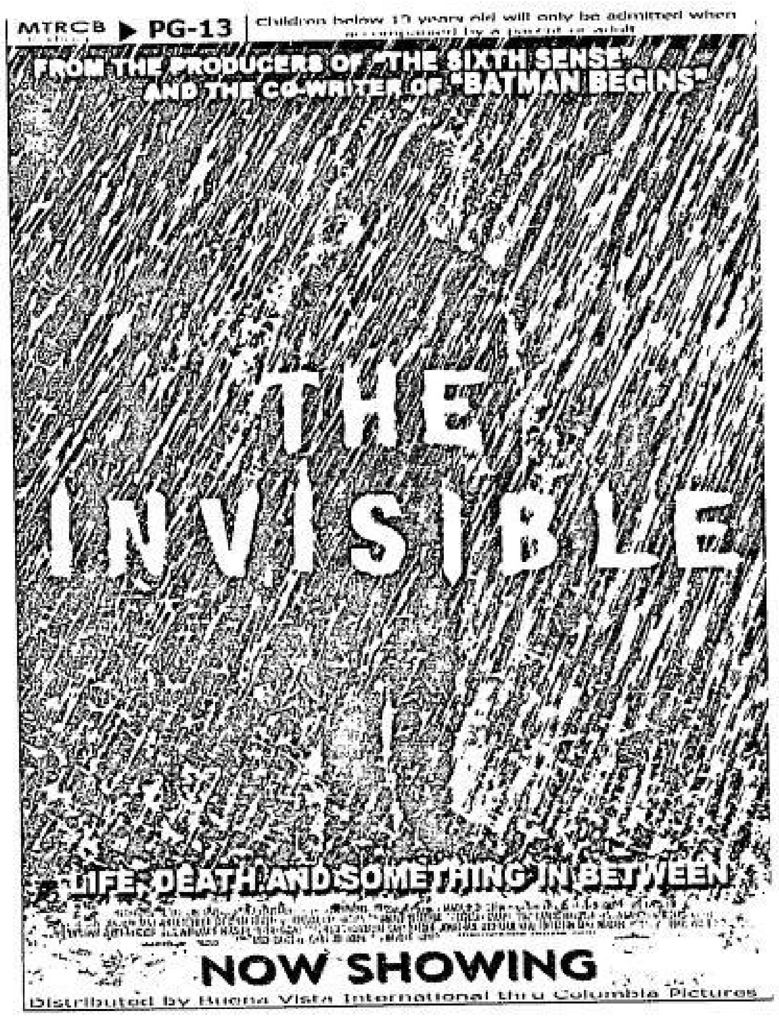
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Children below 13 years old will only be admitted when accompanied by a parent or adult
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IF YOU CAN SEE THE FUTURE, YOU CAN SAVE IT.
NICOLAS CAGE
JULIANNE MOORE JESSICA BIEL
NEXT
From the author of MINORITY REPORT

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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 NEXT	2 THE INVISIBLE	3 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	4 ANGELS	5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	6 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	7 OCEAN'S 13
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 NEXT	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	3 OCEAN'S 13 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE INVISIBLE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 NEXT GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 NEXT	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 OCEAN'S 13		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 THE CONDEMNED	4 ZODIAC			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 NEXT	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 ANGELS		

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Bridgeway, 5pm

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MARKET! MARKET!
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A 'TILAK' for you, sister

Perfect mood, feeling good

From page D6

muning with God, and the priests and nuns behind us nodded in agreement.

The potency of that idea was captured earlier, when Grace Nono opened the show with the song/chant "Dosayan" (literally, "praise"), an invocation that hushed the audience.

The choreography of Douglas Nierras' Powerdance was flawless. In a number called "Tenderness," all the dancers complimented precise movements with angelic expressions on their faces.

Timmy Cruz, who sang several songs and also acted as co-host, was so effusive in talking about the BK that, for a moment, our seat mate was worried that the event would sound like a prayer rally. Thankfully, Timmy caught herself.

Very uplifting

Later, she redeemed the awkward moments by leading the crowd in putting "tilak" in the shape of stars on one another's forehead. As a middle-aged man, a stranger, pinned one on ours, he wished us the best in all our endeavors. It was very uplifting.

At the end of her brief address, Mohini gave her audience three steps to bring about change in ourselves: 1) smile more often; 2) offer others a "sweet" drink in the form of sweet words; and 3) maintain happy feelings.

The mood was thus perfect as Timmy finally led a choir and mime artists in singing a tune about the winning ways of smiling and feeling good. At that point, the crowd at the Big Dome did looked ready for collective transformation.

BOOTS ANSON-ROA

A village ...

From page D1

residences, we will also build a 70 sq. m. multi-purpose hall. Members will provide sweat equity—they will build the homes themselves."

The hall—which can also serve as chapel, social venue and office—is in keeping with GK's long-term goal of community development.

"Mowelfund's livelihood projects can be based at the multi-purpose hall,"

Anson-Roa says. "Currently, we have different programs. We have a food cart, for one. Also, members and their beneficiaries are into the production of laundry and dish-washing detergent, fabric softener and perfume."

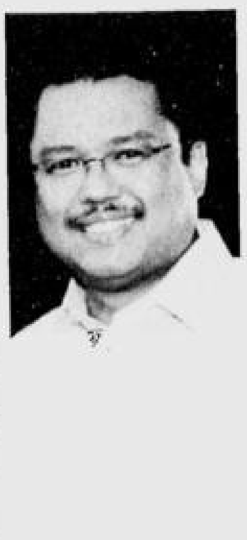
Worskhop

Mowelfund recently teamed up with Rustan's Essenses Foundation in mounting a three-day holistic workshop for 20 dependents of Mowelfund members.

"The workshop ordinarily costs P20,000," Anson-Roa shares. "Mowelfund scholars were also given the opportunity to work at Rustan's. The top graduate has the chance to train in the United Kingdom, in a program valued at P120,000."

Mowelfund's partnership with GK was announced during the premiere of "Paraiso" at the Mall of Asia on June 12, Anson-Roa recalls.

"Paraiso" will begin its commercial run on July 4.



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2 OCEAN'S 13
3 NEXT
4 INVISIBLES
5 WILDERNESS
6 ANGELS
PREMIERE CINEMA
PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
CENTERSTAGE
FANTASTIC FOUR
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
FANTASTIC FOUR
CINEMA 2
NEXT
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1 NEXT
2 WILDERNESS
3 OCEAN'S 13
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
5 ANGELS
6 NEXT
7 FANTASTIC FOUR
8 PAANI KITA IIBIGIN
9 INVISIBLES
10 SILIP
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
12 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 NEXT
2 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 NEXT
5 OCEAN'S 13
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 WILDERNESS
8 BORDERTOWN
9 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
10 ANGELS
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
12 SILIP

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 SHREK 3
2 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
5 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
6 INVISIBLES
7 NEXT
8 ANGELS
9 SILIP
10 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
11 OCEAN'S 13
12 BORDERTOWN

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 NEXT
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 INVISIBLES
5 ANGELS
6 SILIP
7 OCEAN'S 13
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
9 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
10 WILDERNESS

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 NEXT
3 OCEAN'S 13
4 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
5 INVISIBLES
6 ANGELS

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 ANGELS
3 INVISIBLES
4 NEXT
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 OCEAN'S 13
7 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
8 WILDERNESS
9 SILIP

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 NEXT
2 ANGELS
3 INVISIBLE
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 NEXT
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 INVISIBLES
4 WILDERNESS
5 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 OCEAN'S 13
8 SILIP
9 ANGELS
10 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
11 FANTASTIC FOUR
12 BORDERTOWN

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1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 ANGELS
3 ZOMBIES
4 INVISIBLES

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 BORDERTOWN
3 ANGELS
4 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN

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1 NEXT
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 INVISIBLES
4 ANGELS

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2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 ANGELS
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
6 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
7 OCEAN'S 13
8 INVISIBLES

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2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 INVISIBLES
4 CONDEMNED
5 ANGELS
6 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN

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1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 OCEAN'S 13
3 ANGELS
4 THE SHOOTER

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1 OCEAN'S 13
2 BLACKOUT
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 ANGELS

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1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 INVISIBLES
3 ZODIAC
4 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
5 BLACKOUT
6 ANGELS

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1 OCEAN'S 13
2 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 ANGELS

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1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
4 ANGELS

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1 28 WEEKS LATER
2 ANGELS
3 PAN'S LABYRINTH
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

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1 ANGELS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 ZODIAC
4 WHISPER

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1 ZODIAC
2 INVISIBLES
3 ANGELS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FIREHOUSE DOG
3 ANGELS
4 BLACKOUT
5 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
6 CONDEMEND

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 FIREHOUSE DOG
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 BLACKOUT
2 RESERVED
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 ANGELS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 RESERVED
8 BORDERTOWN

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 ZODIAC
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 CONDEMNED
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 BLACKOUT
6 ANGELS
7 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
8 FANTASTIC FOUR

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1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 ANGELS
3 WHISPER
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3	FANTASTIC 4	1:20, 3:40, 6:00 8:20, 10:50	G
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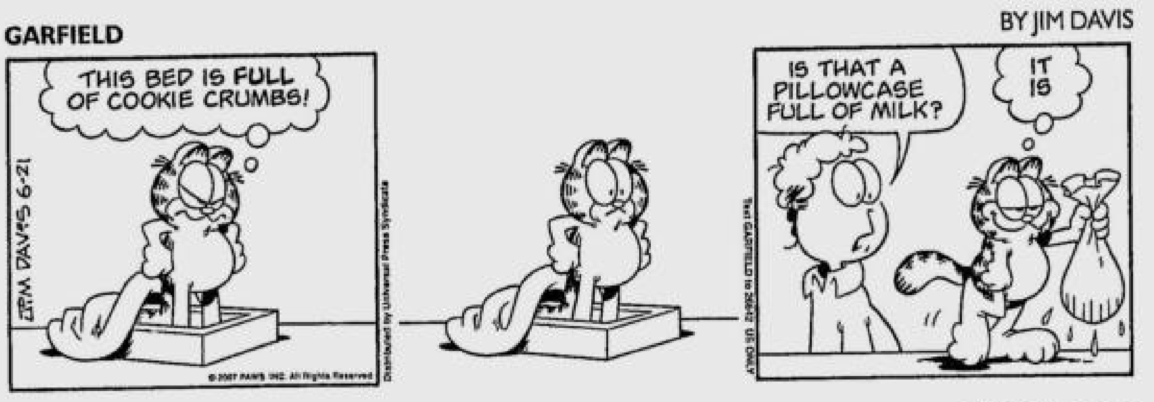
THIS BED IS FULL OF COOKIE CRUMBS!
IS THAT A PILLOWCASE FULL OF MILK?
IT IS
JPM DAVIS 6-21
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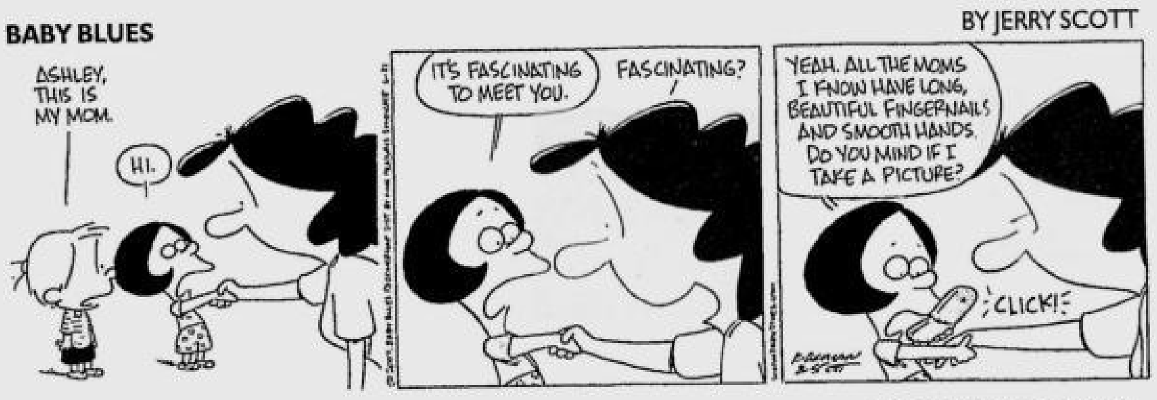
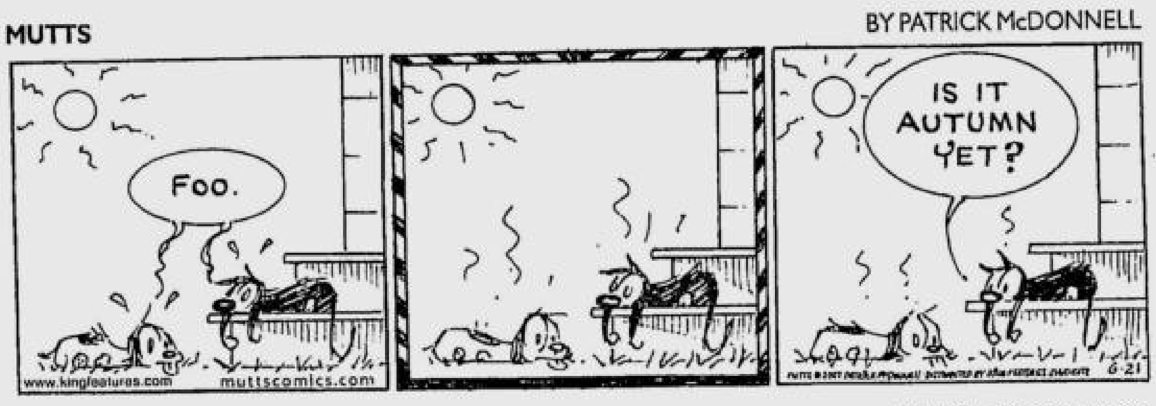
BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


ASHLEY, THIS IS MY MOM.
HI.
IT'S FASCINATING TO MEET YOU.
FASCINATING?
YEAH. ALL THE MOMS I KNOW HAVE LONG, BEAUTIFUL FINGERNAILS AND SMOOTH HANDS. DO YOU MIND IF I TAKE A PICTURE?
CLICK!

MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


FOO.
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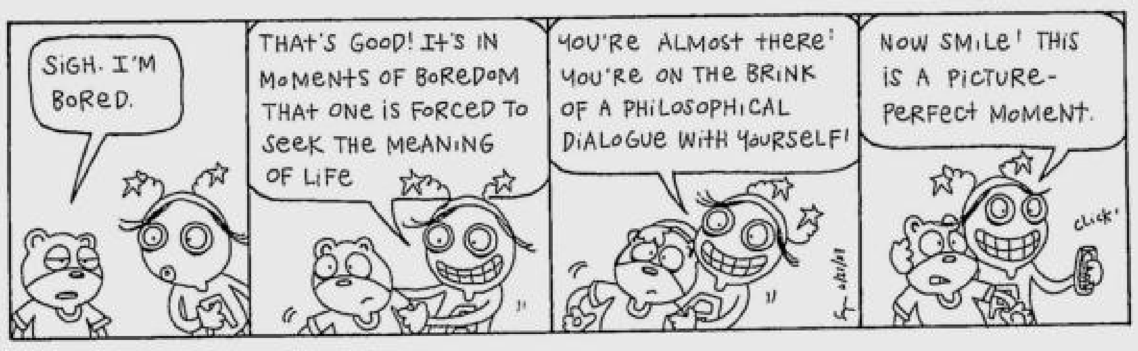
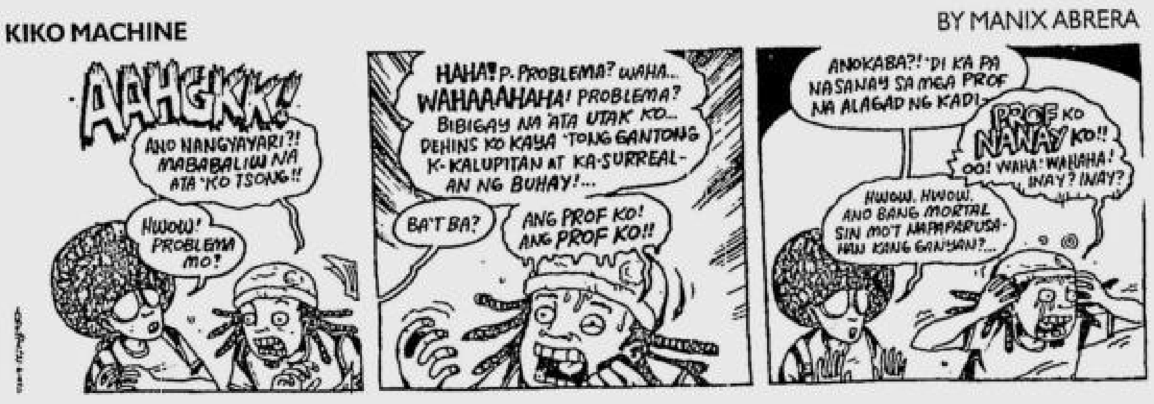
6-21

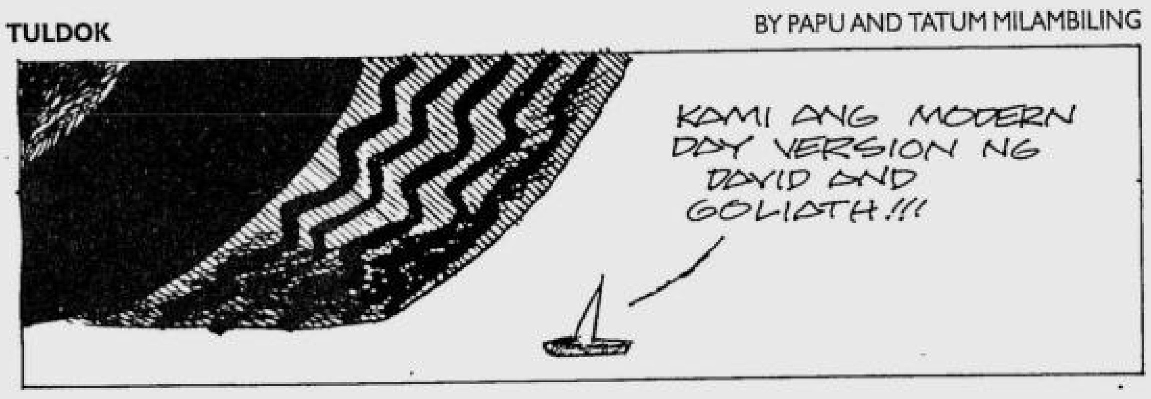
ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SIGH. I'M BORED.
THAT'S GOOD! IT'S IN MOMENTS OF BOREDOM THAT ONE IS FORCED TO SEEK THE MEANING OF LIFE
YOU'RE ALMOST THERE! YOU'RE ON THE BRINK OF A PHILOSOPHICAL DIALOGUE WITH YOURSELF!
NOW SMILE! THIS IS A PICTURE-PERFECT MOMENT.
CLICK!

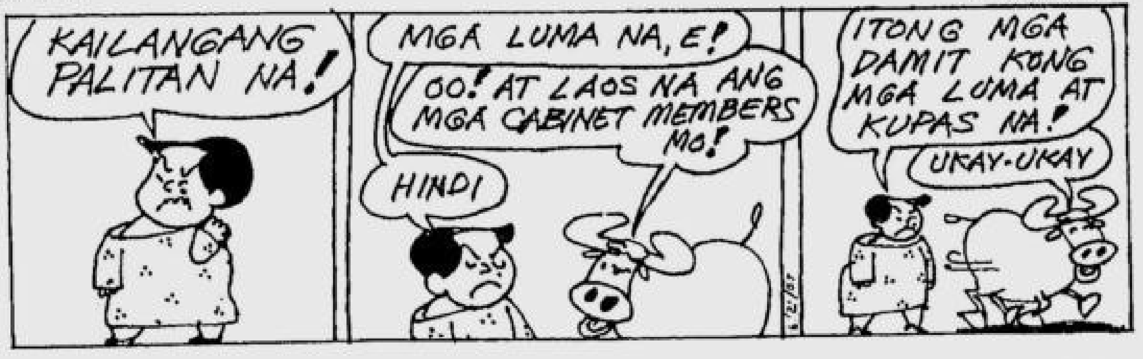
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


AAHGKK!
ANO NANGYAYARI?! MABABALIW NA ATA 'KO TSONG!!
HWOW! PROBLEMA MO?
HAHA! P-PROBLEMA? WAHA... WAHAAAHAHA! PROBLEMA? BIBIGAY NA 'ATA UTAK KO... DEHINS KO KAYA 'TONG GANTONG K-KALUPITAN AT KA-SURREAL-AN NG BUHAY!...
BA'T BA?
ANG PROF KO! ANG PROF KO!!
ANOKABA?! 'DI KA PA NASANAY SA MGA PROF NA ALAGAD NG KADI...
HWOW. HWOW. ANO BANG MORTAL SIN MO'T NAPAPARUSAHAN KANG GANYAN?...
PROF KO NANAY KO!! OO! WAHA! WAHAHA! INAY? INAY?

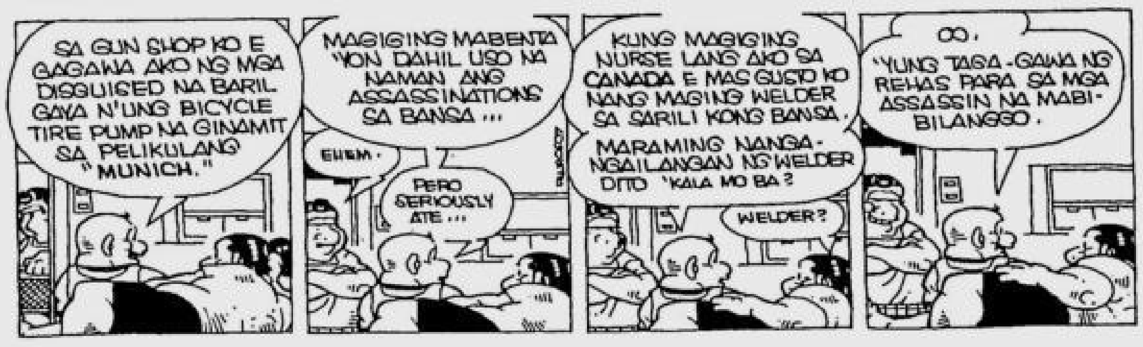
TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KAMI ANG MODERN DAY VERSION NG DAVID AND GOLIATH!!!

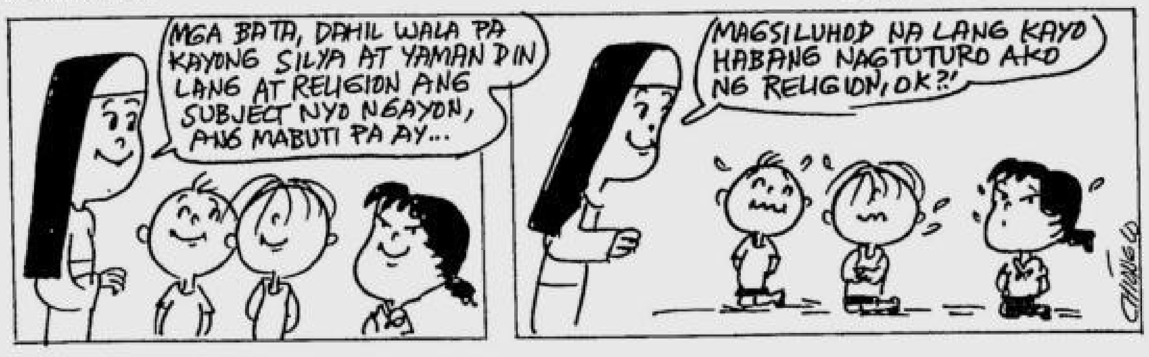
A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


KAILANGANG PALITAN NA!
MGA LUMA NA, E!
OO! AT LAOS NA ANG MGA CABINET MEMBERS MO!
HINDI
ITONG MGA DAMIT KONG MGA LUMA AT KUPAS NA!
UKAY-UKAY

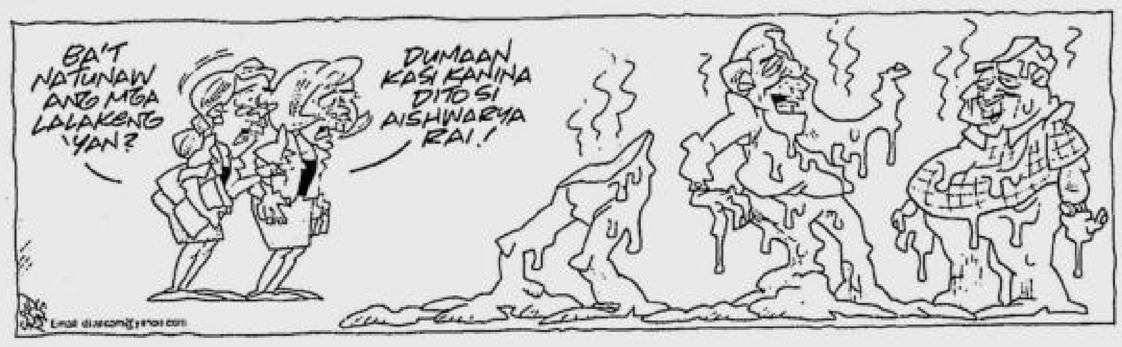
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


SA GUN SHOP KO E GAGAWA AKO NG MGA DISGUISED NA BARIL GAYA N'UNG BICYCLE TIRE PUMP NA GINAMIT SA PELIKULANG "MUNICH."
MAGIGING MABENTA 'YON DAHIL USO NA NAMAN ANG ASSASSINATIONS SA BANSA ...
EHEM.
PERO SERIOUSLY ATE ...
KUNG MAGIGING NURSE LANG AKO SA CANADA E MAS GUSTO KO NANG MAGING WELDER SA SARILI KONG BANSA.
MARAMING NANGANGAILANGAN NG WELDER DITO 'KALA MO BA?
WELDER?
OO.
'YUNG TAGA-GAWA NG REHAS PARA SA MGA ASSASSIN NA MABIBILANGGO.

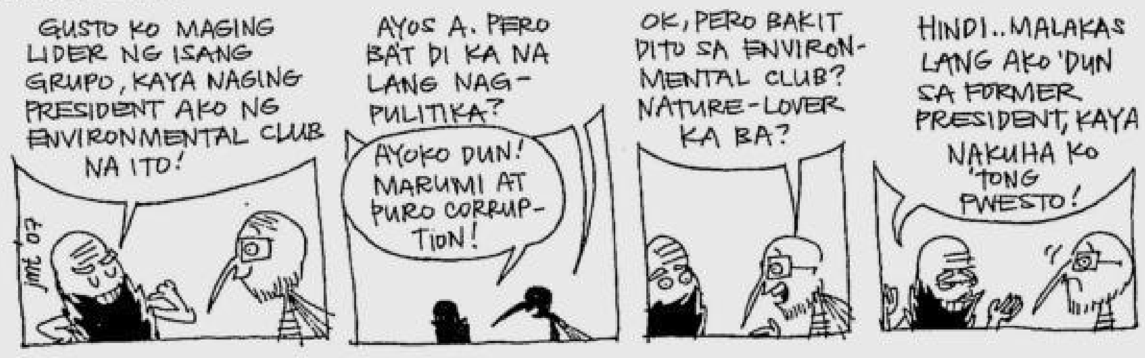
LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MGA BATA, DAHIL WALA PA KAYONG SILYA AT YAMAN DIN LANG AT RELIGION ANG SUBJECT NYO NGAYON, ANG MABUTI PA AY...
MAGSILUHOD NA LANG KAYO HABANG NAGTUTURO AKO NG RELIGION, OK?!
CHIONGLO

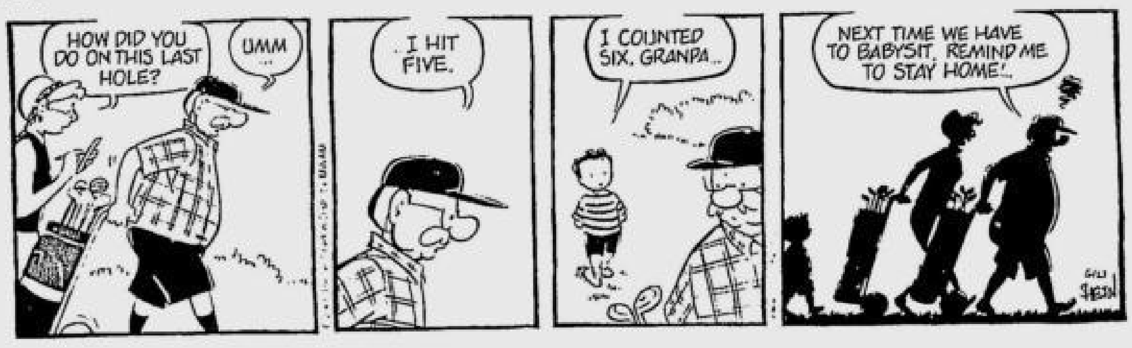
DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BA'T NATUNAW ANG MGA LALAKENG 'YAN?
DUMAAN KASI KANINA DITO SI AISHWARYA RAI!

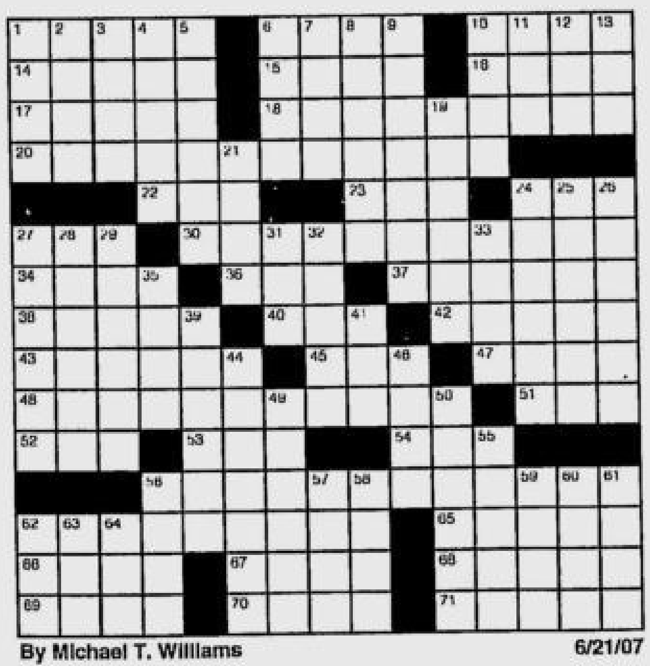
MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


GUSTO KO MAGING LIDER NG ISANG GRUPO, KAYA NAGING PRESIDENT AKO NG ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB NA ITO!
JUNE 07
AYOS A. PERO BAT DI KA NA LANG NAG-PULITIKA?
AYOKO DUN! MARUMI AT PURO CORRUPTION!
OK, PERO BAKIT DITO SA ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB? NATURE-LOVER KA BA?
HINDI.. MALAKAS LANG AKO 'DUN SA FORMER PRESIDENT, KAYA NAKUHA KO 'TONG PWESTO!

BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


HOW DID YOU DO ON THIS LAST HOLE?
UMM ...
I HIT FIVE.
I COUNTED SIX, GRANPA...
NEXT TIME WE HAVE TO BABYSIT, REMIND ME TO STAY HOME!
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

6/21/07

ACROSS
1 Spanish hero
6 God with a hammer
10 Hunk of dirt
14 Rhone feeder
15 Be down with
16 Burden
17 Birthplace of Robespierre
18 Pachyderms
20 Start of Helen Keller quote
22 LAX info.
23 Morse unit
24 Turkish honcho
27 __ jacet
30 Part 2 quote
34 Minute quantity
36 Pull behind
37 Auctioneer
38 Rugby formation
40 Part 3 of quote
42 Hangman's knot
43 Frantic cry
45 Catch red-handed
47 New Mexico art colony
48 Part 4 of quote
51 Letters that bang
52 Class for U.S. immigrants
53 Half an African fly?
54 Mined mineral
56 End of quote
62 Tenor Luciano
65 Chopin piece
66 OPEC member
67 Song or slug ending
68 "Night Moves" singer Bob
69 Spam containers
70 Soleil Moon __ of "Punkie Brewster"
71 Actor Williams

DOWN
1 Morales of "N.Y.P.D. Blue"
2 Zhivago's love
3 Gladiolus bulb
4 Goofy
5 1539 Florida visitor
6 Actress Gill
7 50%
8 Carry to excess
9 Mends
10 Dressed (in)
11 Actor Chaney
12 Mare's morsel
13 Lic. to pull teeth
19 Hired killers
21 Wilson's predecessor
24 Waterborne
25 Continues
26 Take into custody
27 Sticky situation
28 Restless desires
29 Cowboy's parking lot?
31 __-disant (so-called)
32 Sharp, nasal tone
33 Coin opening
35 Sierra Club co-founder John
39 Trusted advisor
41 __-jongg
44 Dismiss
46 Explosive report
49 More organized
50 Superlatively perverse
55 Aromatic compound
56 Soaks up rays
57 Minuscule
58 Lo-cal
59 Elephantine
60 R&D product
61 Jaunty
62 Abyss
63 Jackie's second
64 Delivery vehicle

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

W	A	D		E	M	E	N	D		S	T	R	I	P
A	T	E		F	O	L	I	O		L	O	O	S	E
P	O	I	N	T	O	F	N	O	R	E	T	U	R	N
I	N	C	U	S				D	O	W	E	L		
T	E	E	N		M	A	P	L	E	S		E	T	A
I	S	S		T	O	R	R	E			S	T	E	S
			A	E	R	I	E		T	H	A	T	C	H
	N	O	G	R	E	A	T	S	H	A	K	E	S	
F	O	R	U	M	S		E	M	I	L	E			
O	L	D	E			S	N	E	R	T		L	A	P
E	O	N		S	H	A	D	E	D		R	A	V	I
			A	L	T	O	S			A	A	R	O	N
M	O	N	E	Y	I	S	N	O	O	B	J	E	C	T
D	E	C	A	L		E	A	S	E	L		D	E	O
I	R	E	N	E		S	P	O	D	E		O	T	S

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6/21/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fine mind, which carefully discriminates and digests everything around you. You are highly observant. Nevertheless, you embrace life with passion, sometimes to the point of obsession. (You don't want to miss anything!) Your relationships are intense and very sensual. In the year ahead, you'll wrap up something you've been involved with for the past nine years.
Birthdate of: Prince William, British royal; Doug Savant, actor; Erica Durance, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a great time to introduce reforms into your life, especially to your appearance, your image and your style of relating to those who are closest to you. You'll be happy with what you achieve.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Some kind of secret activity or behind-the-scenes work can go very well now. Everything you need is at hand. (Now you just have to do the job.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Join forces with friends or groups to create reforms wherever they're needed. Any kind of collective effort now will be extremely effective—and certainly worth your efforts

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're ambitious and very powerful right now. Whatever you want to get done can be a piece of cake. In fact, you're like a hot knife cutting through butter.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're extremely convincing now when discussing politics, religion, metaphysics or any spiritual idea. Because others are ready to listen to you, you're in a powerful position.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Discussions with bosses, parents and VIPs will be extremely effective today. Talk about how you want things to be better. Make suggestions. People will listen to you!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Even though you have ideas about how to improve your friends, do they want to hear what you have to say? You might have to keep your good advice to yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You have excellent ideas about how to improve things at work or on the job. Don't hesitate to share these good ideas with others. You know what you're talking about.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Plans related to vacations, sports or working with children look promising. Flirtations are also exciting today. It's a grab bag of fun possibilities!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You can accomplish a lot with renovations, redecorating or making changes within your family structure today. You've got great ideas about how to improve things.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're extremely convincing today. Now is the time to use your persuasion and influence to act on, teach, write down or sell your ideas. You're hot!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Trust your moneymaking ideas today. You're hot to trot. You can see new and better ways of making money or even spending it. Share your financial thoughts with others.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		7				4		
	6	3		5		7	1	
					2			
		5	8		3			
	8			9			7	
			7		4	1		
			5					
	7	4		1		9	2	
		9				5		

Difficulty Level ★★★

6/21

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

8	3	9	6	4	1	5	2	7
5	2	6	7	3	9	4	8	1
7	4	1	5	8	2	9	6	3
1	8	2	9	7	4	6	3	5
6	9	5	1	2	3	8	7	4
4	7	3	8	5	6	1	9	2
9	6	7	3	1	5	2	4	8
3	1	4	2	9	8	7	5	6
2	5	8	4	6	7	3	1	9

Difficulty Level ★★★

'My dad and I made peace in 2000. I plan to write a book about the plight of illegitimate children. We are not mistakes; we are gifts'

GIA

AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

LOUIE HEREDIA

POPS and Martin

'Secret' daughter, show biz dad now okay

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

IT MUST BE THE SPIRIT OF FATHER'S Day lingering on that prompted my long-lost friend **Gia** to e-mail me about her mended relationship with her comedian/TV host dad. I met Gia many years ago when my mom first had an exposé about her on "See-True."

Only 15 at the time, Gia had sought my mom's help to reach out to her dad, who was already married, with kids then. (Gia is a year older than her dad's eldest daughter with the wife, a singer/actress.)

"It took me several years to get over the pain and resentment," she wrote. "But it has made me a better person. My dad and I made peace in 2000. I plan to write a book about the plight of illegitimate children. We are not mistakes; we are gifts."

This reminded me of another friend, also named Gia, who once asked me to help her get through to **Vandolph**, father of her love child. I'm happy that this column paved the way for Vandolph and his daughter, **Gaby**, to meet a few years back.

I prodded the first Gia to allow me to print her photograph. I said beauty like hers should be seen by the world. She's not too keen about joining show biz, so her hesitation was understandable. "I'm happy being an events coordinator and Web designer," she insisted. "But if it's a show with my dad, maybe I'll try it just for fun."

In a text message yesterday, Gia added: I'm not begging my dad to acknowledge me in public. I'm past that."

What a joy to see that the little girl blue who ran to my mom many dramas ago has bloomed into a woman of substance!

Mom and Pops

Pops Fernandez and I greeted each other last Father's Day. The dual roles we play as dad and mom in our individual lives isn't easy, but our kids make it all worthwhile. Pipay allowed me to share with readers **Martin Nievera**'s text greeting to her: "Pipay, today everyone is greeting me and proclaiming me a great father, but I cannot take the credit. You have been father to both Robin and Ram more than I have and I thank you for a job well done. So let me with all the humility I can muster, greet you, too, a Happy Father's Day."

She told me that she and Martin saw each other briefly when she was on a concert tour of the US (reportedly a rousing success!) "I didn't get to see his baby, though. Maybe he wasn't ready to show Santino to me," Pops said. She said the highlight of her trip was watching "Oprah" *live*. "I was starstruck!" Pops recounted. "Her guests were **Michelle Pfeiffer** and my ultimate crush, **John Travolta**." Too bad the Talk Show Queen and the Concert Queen didn't get to jam.

Give credit...

Singer **Louie Heredia** is disappointed that the people behind "Angels" used one of his original songs, "For the Rest of My Life," as the movie's theme, without acknowledging him. "How sad that they are passing the song off as their own, as sung by **Kyla** and **Jennylyn**. The least they could have done was inform me. Where's the respect?" he laments.

I texted producer **Becky Aguila** for a reaction, but got no reply. Credit, not *edit*!

Juday care

Judy Ann Santos, fresh from her anniversary concert at the Big Dome, is not one to sit on her laurels. Her Mommy Carol *says* the *multi-ginhawa* formulation of Tuseran keeps Juday cough-free, no matter how crazy her sked gets. Not to mention TLC from her beau **Ryan Agoncillo**. Good love, just like a bad cough can never be hidden. Ryan and Tuseran both take care of Juday...ahem, ahem, ahem.

Ugly no more

Finalists of the one-of-a-kind search, "Miss Ugly No More," got the best surgical care from Beverly Hills 6750 as they got breast implants. The procedure was administered by noted international plastic surgeon Dr. **Charles Randquist** of Stockholm, Sweden. Beverly Hills 6750 Cosmetic Surgery & Skin Institute is the exclusive breast implant center in the Philippines for the McGhan Style 410, the company's top-of-the-line implant (contoured). I am tempted to try it so I can find my missing cleavage. The breast, *este*, the best is yet to come for the winner of the search on July 30.

For feedback, e-mail wateringhole-shangrila@yahoo.com

PHOTOS BY AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

CHARITY First mime artists

ONE OF TWO numbers by Douglas Nierras' Powerdance

JOEY Ayala

DADI Gulzar, right, and BK Rajni

Perfect mood, feeling good

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

REVIEW

JOEY AYALA COULDN'T HAVE PUT it better: *"Kung kaya mong isipin, kaya mong gawin..."*

The singer-songwriter was clearly in his element as he urged the audience to follow his lyrics about the power of thoughts and the will to change for the better.

Along with several guest artists, Joey provided the kind of entertainment numbers that lent more meaning to "Time and Transformation," Brahma Kumaris' 25th anniversary celebration Monday night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Brahma Kumaris (BK) is an international educational institute that operates in more than 100 countries. In the Philippines, eight BK centers have been established since 1982.

Touch of humor

Hosted by Tessie "Teysi" Tomas, "Time and Transformation" presented music, dance and videos to enhance the principles that BK has been promoting quietly, but successfully, through its "students."

Supporters, including Marikina City Mayor Marides Fernando, former Miss Universe and now rural development worker Margie Moran Floirendo, new student Mon Tulfo (a columnist of the INQUIRER) and many others, personally attest to the knowledge and benefits they have gained from joining BK programs.

Teysi's spiels had the slightest touch of humor: "Ang Brahma Kumaris *po, hindi kulto, hindi* religion, *at hindi rin po* pyramid scam..."

In a nutshell, the BK, as an organization affiliated with the United Nations, seeks to make everyone better persons.

Guest of honor

At the anniversary celebration, the BK had for a guest of honor Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, one of its top administrators and concurrently director of centers in New Delhi and Kashmir. (The organization is based in Rajasthan, India.)

Better known as Dadi Gulzar, Mohini was a striking presence during the program. Her eyes brightly captured the term "windows of the soul."

HIRDAYA MOHINI

Speaking on center stage with an interpreter, Mohini's message, delivered after the cleverly conceived numbers, focused on recognizing the soul, the "master of the body and mind."

Mohini said everyone can tap their limitless potential by acknowledging the soul.

How? The key word is silence, which the Mohini defined as "the state in which the mind is engaged in pure and elevated thoughts."

A few minutes of silence every day, she said, can brush away tension, anger, sorrow and other negative thoughts and feelings that cause conflicts.

Silence is power, Mohini said. Frankly, it may not solve corruption and world hunger outright. At the very least, however, it can help change people's minds and lead them to engage in positive acts, starting with real communication.

Communion

And how to achieve silence? Go right to the source, Mohini intimated. Recognize God, the true giver of peace.

She said meditating was com-

PERFECT/ D4

HENY SISON
CULINARY SCHOOL
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

THE ESSENTIAL COOKING SERIES: This 20-day hands on class is our innovative way of teaching the basics of cooking & baking. This program is for anyone who wants to work towards becoming a professional chef. Class begins **June 27 – August 31, 2007.** Classes are held every **Wednesday & Friday** from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Tuition fee includes ingredients, manual, aprons, chef's jacket and chef's kit. For more information call **726-5316 or 412 7792** and ask Rita or Jenny

July 2(Monday)9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.(classroom A) **BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison** *Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. **P1,500**

July 2(Monday)2:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) **BROWNIE COLLECTION by: Heny Sison** * To Die for Chocolate Brownie, Chocolate Amarello Brownies, White Chocolate Macadamia Brownies, Denise's Favorite Brownies, Carmela's Chocolate Strawberry Brownies **P1,500**

July 2(Monday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **SIOPAO & MAMI WORKSHOP by: Chef Katherine Sion**, restaurateur (Ding Hao & Fat Kat restaurant), caterer and an expert in Chinese cuisine. * Chicken Bola-Bola, Asado Pao, Bola-bola Pao, Jumbo Siopao with Chinese Sausage, Chicken Asado Mami & Beef Mami. **P2,500**

July 3(Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.(classroom A) **MANY WAYS TO COOK CHICKEN by: Chef Aileen Anastacio**, owner of Goodies N' Sweet Bakeshop & C'est Si Bon, Dean's list graduate of Culinary at the California Culinary Academy *Citrus-Ginger Grilled Chicken, Chicken Cacciatore, Chicken Inasal, Thai Style Grilled Chicken, Roasted Chicken with Lemon, Garlic and Rosemary, Buffalo Wings and Chicken Bulgogi. **P1,800**

July 3(Thursday)10:00 a.m. –4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **BREAKFAST & BRUNCH COOKERY by: Chef Vivian Syyap**, Private Chef/Caterer, Associates in Occupational Studies, Culinary Arts, with honors. The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, New York. *Eggs: Boiled (coddled, soft-boiled, medium-boiled, hard-boiled), Baked, Fried (sunny-side up, over easy, over medium, over hard), Poached – basic and variation; Scrambled – basic and variation and Omelet – French style or rolled; Frittata/Tortilla or Flat, Hollandaise Sauce **Pancakes:** Basic Pancake with variation; French Toast, Hash Brown Potatoes, Lyonnaise Potatoes **Quiche** (Basic Shortcrust Pastry & Quiche Lorraine), Chocolate Chip Pancake, Waffles and Basic Crêpe Recipe. **P1,700**

July 4(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **COFFEE CLASS by: Chef Aileen Anastacio** * If you are planning to open a coffee shop this course is for you. Learn the four fundamentals of coffee brewing, home espresso, guide to steaming & foaming. Make fun toppings & garnishes & master the art of coffee making **Recipes:** Caffé Latte, Caffé Mocha, Caffé Americano, Cappuccino, Espresso Macchiato & Espresso Con Panna, Almond Coffee Freeze, Icy Rum Coffee Cream, Toffee Coffee, Mudslide Malt, Mocha Rumba, Rocky Road and more! **P3,000**

July 5-6(Thu.-Fri.)9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **CAKE DECORATING COURSE I by: Heny Sison** *Learn the basics of cake decorating: icing, color, star, shell, dots, outline and scallop borders; the rose, figure piping: clowns & booties. Each student will bake & decorate a character birthday cake. **Full participation. P4,000**

July 5(Thursday)10:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **THE ART OF MERINGUE by: Chef Vicki Villanueva**, from Stars & Bizu, let Chef Vicki share with you her wealth of knowledge and experience of patisseries and restaurant concepts, skills, techniques & operations. **Recipes:** Frozen Brazo de Mercedes, Sans Rival, Concorde, Pavlova, Canonigo and Marjolaine. **Reservation is Requested! P2,650**

July 7(Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **BARBECUE WORKSHOP WITH DIPS AND SAUCES by: Chef Sam de Leoz**, Food Consultant, Stylist, Photographer, Caterer, Food demonstrator and Culinary Competition Events Consultant specializing in Basic & Classical Cookery; International & Asian CuisineHands-on Barbecue Workshop providing innovative methods prepared for small entrepreneurs and caterers to increase your profits. *Spicy Buffalo Wings w/ Blue Cheese Dip & Celery Sticks, Famous Aling N2 Barbecue w/ Melitzanosalata (Spicy Aubergine Dip), Indonesian Mixed Satay: Mixed Beef & Lamb w/ Sambal Kacang (Peanut Sauce), Yakitori w/ Mango Black Bean Salsa, Grilled Seafood Medley: Prawns, Scallops & Fish Fillet w/ Mustard – Dill Vinaigrette, Grilled Sausage w/ Cilantro Aioli Dip, Amorgozo (Ampalaya) & Smoked Fish Morsels w/ Cottage Cheese & Garlic Crunch Dressing, Java Rice. **P2,000**

July 9-10(Mon.-Tue.)9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A)**CAKE DECORATING COURSE II by: Heny Sison** *Add amazing new skills to your cake decorating – the world of icing flowers, distinctive borders, flower spray & specialty flowers. As a final project you will decorate a basketweave cake filled with cascading flower. **Full participation. P4,000**

July 9(Monday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom B) **PAELLA CLASS by: Chef Ed Quimson**, is a seasoned master chef of Spanish origin, creator of Chef Ed's Restaurant at Salcedo Village, Makati City and his latest restaurant FILOS at The Fort, Makati City. He has also lent his expertise to such restaurants as La Tasca, Via Mare, The Nielsen Tower, the Member's Lounge of the Phil. Stock Exchange & the Subic Yacht Club *Paella Negra, Paella a la Montana, Paella Catalan, Paella Sevillana (Vegetarian) and Paella Con Setas Y Mejillones. **P1,800**

July 10(Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B)**MEAT PROCESSING I by: Chef Vicki Villanueva** Open a rewarding all day dining (tapsilog) or home based business. Apply the new concepts, principles and techniques of making a longanisa, chorizo, tocino, corned beef, tapa, luncheon meat, embotido from scratch. The preparation of ice tea, atchara and flavored rice, and lunch is included. **Reservation is Requested! P2,800**

July 11(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **BASIC FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS by: Glenn Remorca**, floral designer *Learn the theories, styles, trends, techniques, sourcing, flower care and maintenance, basic forms, arrangements and flowers for weddings. **Lecture, demonstration and hands-on production. Bring a pair of scissors. P2,500**

July 12(Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE COOKING by: Chef Koichi Kondo**, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants *Learn all-time favorites Japanese dishes applicable to home & professional cooking such as: Sushi, Sashimi, Sukiyaki, Miso Soup, Tempura, Teriyaki, Udon Noodles in Clay Pot, Chicken Teriyaki & Japanese Fried Rice. **P2,500**

July 12(Thursday)9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.(classroom B) **BAKED PASTAS by: Chef Aileen AnastacioRecipes:** Beef Lasagna, Vegetable Lasagna, Chicken Macaroni, Baked Spaghetti and Baked Seafood Pasta. **P1,800**

July 12(Thursday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom B) **BAKED PASTAS II by: Chef Aileen Anastacio** * Spinach, Ricotta and Mushroom Canneloni, Meat Canneloni with 2 Cheese, Baked Ham, Broccoli and Cheese Fusili, Seafood Lasagne & Sundried Tomato and Eggplant Lasagne. **P1,800**

July 13(Friday)9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.(classroom A)**EASY CHINOY PAMBAHAY I by: Chef Katherine Sion** Learn step by step instructions that help you make a successful and delicious meal. Lunch is included. * Bean Curd with 8 Treasure Soup, Hainanese Chicken, Lion head meatball, Sliced Beef with Bamboo Shoots and Straw Mushroom, Chami with Sate Sauce and Macadamia Black Sesame Cookie. **Reservation is requested. Please bring your own personal apron. P1,650**

July 13(Friday)1:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A)**DIMSUM I by: Chef Katherine Sion** * Congee, Siomai, Dumpling, Chicken Feet, Fried Shrimp Ball and Buchi.**P1,700**

July 14(Saturday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.(classroom A)**HEALTHY GOURMET - SOUTH BEACH DIET PHASE 1 by: Jacqueline H. Alleje**, owner of Rizal Dairy Farm, Swiss-Pinoy restaurateur (Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant), organic caterer and food consultant (Petra's naturally green, global, gourmet) *This class is suitable for all people who want to be able to cook healthy dishes, lose weight considerably and people with health concerns such as diabetes, high blood pressure and other dietary restrictions. The class will guide you through the principles of healthy nutrition, South Beach Diet phase 1 "Swiss Pinoy Style", which uses locally available ingredients. **Complete menu plan and recipes for 14 days of Phase 1. P1,650 plus P700 recipe booklet for Phase 1**

July 14(Saturday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) **HEALTHY GOURMET – SOUTH BEACH DIET COMBO CLASS PHASE 2 and 3 by: Jacqueline H. Alleje** * This class is suitable for all people who want to learn how to cook healthy dishes, deepen their knowledge of nutrition and weight control, as well as people with health concerns, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and other dietary restrictions. This class teaches wholesome recipes which reintroduce carbohydrates with complete recipe booklets for phase 2 and 3 of the South Beach Diet. **P1,650plus P700 per recipe booklet**

July 16(Monday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A)**KOREAN COOKING I by: Chef Cecile Park**, owner of Silla Korean Restaurant & food consultant to various Korean restaurants in Metro Manila *Beef Bulgogi (Tenderloin & ordinary), Chicken Bulgogi, Pork Bulgogi, Chap Chae, Mi Yuk Guk (Soups: Seaweeds, Beef or Tahong), Bibimbap & Kalbi Jim. **P2,500**

July 16(Monday)9:30 – 12:30 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS ! CHINESE STREET FOOD / PANG-NEGOSYO by: Chef Katherine Sion** * Beef Siomai, Potsticker, Cantonese Machang, Steamed Shrimp Dumpling with Chili Sauce, Fried Asado Kaliskis. **Demonstration with student participation. P2,200**

July 16(Monday)1:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS ! PINOY KAKANIN AT IBA PA! by: Chef Katherine Sion** * Palitaw, Putong Puti, Suman sa Lihiya, Sinukmani, Ginataan na Bilo-Bilo and Kutsinta **Reservation is requested. P1,650**

July 17 (Tuesday)9:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **FOOD CART V - HOUSE OF PANDESAL by: Chef Vicki Villanueva Recipes:** Baliwag Pandesal, My Moms Special Pandesal, Pandesal Putok, Egg Pandesal, Whole Wheat Pandesal, Cheese Pandesal, Adobo Pandesal, Pizza Pandesal, Ham Cheese Pandenini. **Demonstration w/ student participation. P2,500**

July 17(Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS ! CHARCUTERIE BASICS II (SAUSAGE WORKSHOP) by: Chef Vivian SyyapRecipes:** Chorizo, Fine Swiss Bratwurst, Hot Italian Sausage, Fresh Beef Sausage and Garlic Sausage. **P3,500**

July 18(Wednesday)9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) **ARTISAN BREAD BAKING by: Jacqueline Alleje** * Nothing equals the satisfaction of home baked breads. In this class you will learn how to bake savory and sweet quick breads. This class is a must for all who wants to complete their skill of healthy cooking. This class will teach you how to prepare the most delicious healthy breads. And, if you want to turn it into a small business, we teach you how to **Recipes:** Whole Wheat Sandwich Bread, Yogurt Graham, Herb-Onion-Bacon Bread, Yogurt Graham Bread, Bread Sticks, Focaccia, Whole Wheat Swiss Quark, Raisin Bread and Mango Tea Bread. **P2,500**

July 19(Thursday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.(classroom A) **THAI COOKING I by: Chef Aileen Anastacio** * Crispy Catfish Salad with Mango, Tom Yum Goong, Pan-Fried Fillet of Fish with Basil and Chili Garlic Sauce, Chicken Pandan with Sesame Sauce, Paad Thai and Water Chestnut with Sweet Coconut Milk. **Demonstration with student participation. P1,700**

July 19(Thursday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) **THAI COOKING II by: Chef Aileen Anastacio** * Clear Soup with minced pork, Prawn and Pomelo Salad, Red Curry with Roasted Duck and Lychees, Thai Fried Spring Rolls, Pineapple Fried Rice with Prawns and Banana Fritters in Coconut Batter**Demonstration with student participation. P1,700**

July 19(Thursday)9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS ! TECHNIQUES OF FINE COOKING II (Featuring Roasting and Baking) by: Chef Vicki Villanueva** Learn the ABC of roasting & baking using beef, pork, chicken & fish.- Learn to bake flat bread, dessert & make sauces. Each student will learn to debone chicken and make relleno. **Recipes are:** Salt Crusted Norwegian whole Salmon, Cochinillo with Honey Mustard, Aioli & Hoisin, Pita Bread, U.S. Angus Roast Beef with Red Wine Sauce, Smoked Roasted Chicken Relleno with Mushroom Sauce, Potato Gratin and Crème Brulee. **Lunch is included. Please make your reservation early. Reservation is Requested! Please bring apron. P2,850**

July 20(Friday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **DIFFERENT CHOCOLATE CAKES by: Chef Jacqueline Ang Po** * Chocolate Fudge Cake, Flourless Chocolate Walnut Cake, Sachertorte, German Chocolate Cake and Warm Chocolate Souffle Cake **P1,800**

July 21(Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **RAINY DAYS AND MONDAYS COMFORT SOUPS, STEWS, AND CASSEROLES I by: Chef Sam de Leoz** Say goodbye to those rainy days and Monday blues and say hello to 1-dish comfort foods **Recipes:** Prawn Bisque, Hungarian Goulash, Balbacua, Ossobuco alla Milanese w/ Mushroom Combo Risotto, Beef Pares and Sopa de Mansco **Demonstration with student participation. P1,850**

July 23(Monday)9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.(classroom A) **JAPANESE RICE TOPPINGS by: Chef Koichi KondoRecipes:** Oyako-don (Chicken & Egg on Rice), Gyudon (Beef Bowl), Tendon (Tempura Bowl), Katsu-don (Pork Cutlet Bowl), Soboro-don (Minced Chicken & Egg Bowl), Tori Teriyaki-don (Chicken Teriyaki). **P1,700**

July 23(Monday)1:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A)**SUSHI CLASS by: Chef Koichi Kondo** *Temaki-Zushi (Do-It Yourself Sushi Rolls), Bara-Zushi (Scattered Sushi), Inari-Zushi (Sushi Pockets), Futo-Maki Zushi (Thick-Rolled Sushi), Teka-Maki (Hand-rolled Tuna Sushi), Kappa-Maki (Sea Cucumber Sushi) and California Maki **P1,700**

July 23(Monday) 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS ! EASY FASTFOOD RECIPES 4 by: Chef Katherine Sion** * Soup No 5, Quekiam with Atsara, Braised Beef Kenchi Vegetable, Fried Red Chicken, Misua Guisado and Chinese Fresh Lumpia **P1,650**

July 23(Monday)1:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom B)**POPULAR CHINESE DISHES II by: Chef Katherine Sion** *Beancurd with Eight Treasure Soup, Fried Chicken w/ Oyster Sauce, Fried Assorted Meats in A Bag, Grilled Beef Fillet w/ Special Sauce, Steamed Fish Fillet in Soy Sauce, Yang Chow Fried Rice and Mango w/ Sago. **P1,700**

July 24(Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.(classroom A)**HOME MADE ICE CREAM AND DESSERTS by: Jacqueline H. Alleje** Learn how to make home made ice creams and desserts* Vanilla Ice Cream, Coconut Ice Cream, Chocolate Double Mint Ice Cream, Banana and Cashew Nuts Ice Cream, Strawberry and Mango Sherbet, Ice Cream with Hot Cherry Sauce, Iced Cappuccino Cups, Mango Crepe with Chocolate Ricotta Ice Cream and Strawberry Sauce. **P1,850**

July 24(Tuesday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) **MUFFIN WORKSHOP by: Jacqueline H. Alleje** * Muffins can be considered the healthier alternatives to doughnuts and cinnamon buns. They are good to eat, and can be made with a wide array of nutritious and delicious ingredients. Learn the perfect steps to perfect muffins and choose from 10 mouthwatering recipes: Banana Yogurt Muffin, Chocolate-Ricotta Muffin, Spicy Raisin Muffin, Cocoa-Nut-Oatmeal Muffin, Sweet Potato-Walnut Muffin, Parmesan-Tomato Muffin, Chocolate-Cinnamon Muffin, and Low Fat Muffins, Herbed Brown Rice, Carrot-Orange and Raisin Bran Muffin. Students may assist in the preparation of the muffins. **P1,500**

July 24(Tuesday)9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS ! RETAIL BAKESHOP III by: Chef Vicki Villanueva** Learn the latest and the hottest bread in town **Recipes:** Meat Floss Loaf, Spring Onions and Mahu Rolls, Caterpillar Bread, Spinach Twist, Green Tea Bread, Coco Bread, Caramelized Onion and Bacon Twist and Floss Cake **Demonstration w/ student participation. Reservation is requested! P2,550**

July 25(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **SPECIAL TABLE AND HOME DECOR FLOWER ARRANGEMENT by: Glenn Remorca** Table Centerpieces w/ actual demonstration and table setting presentation **Lecture, demonstration and hands-on production. Bring a pair of scissors. P3,000**

July 26(Thursday)9:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.(classroom A) **RICE TOPPING AT IBA PA I by: Chef Katherine Sion** *Braised Chicken with Mushroom with Rice, Braised Beef with Rice, Saute Shrimp with Chili Sauce with Rice, Braised Pork with Rice, Saute Fish Fillet with Bean Curd in Oyster Sauce, Quampang (Fukien Rice). **Reservation is requested. P2,000**

July 26(Thursday)1:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A)**DIMSUM II by: Chef Katherine Sion** * Steamed Pork Spareribs in Tausi Sauce, Chicken Siomai, Sharksfin Siomai, Two Colors Siomai, Wanton Mami and Egg Tart. **P1,700**

July 26(Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B)**THE ARTFUL CUPCAKE II by: Chef Jacqueline Ang-Po** Another Round of Flavorful cupcakes with Colorful designs. Learn how to bake, decorate and mix and match pretty cupcakes! Easy to make and easy to sell. **Recipes:** Peanut Butter Cupcakes with ChocNut Buttercream, Chocolate Chip Surprise, Mini Lemon Torte Cups, Red Velvet with Lemon Cream Cheese, Toffee Buttercream, Plus learn how to pipe Buttercream flowers! Rose, Carnation, Blossom, daisy and more!**P1,800**

July 27(Friday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **JAPANESE COOKING I (All Time Favorite Japanese Recipes) by: Chef Koichi Kondo** * Miso Soup, Tempura, Nimono, Yakimono, California Maki, Chilled Soba, Noodles with Nori, Skewered Dumplings with Brown Sauce. **P1,700**

July 28(Saturday)8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **NEW CLASS ! QUICK CLASSIC CAFE FOOD by: Chef Sam de Leoz** Increase your income by learning how to make the most sellable food items in Cafes. We'll teach you to cook and plate quick meals. Plus! give info on sidings, storage and shelf life.**Recipes:** Chicken ala Kiev, Beef Salpicao, Roast Chicken, Salisbury Steak, Hainanese Chicken Rice, Fish Fillet with Tartar Sauce and Hickory Spareribs **Free Recipes only: (no demo) Salad Dressings: Thousand Island, Caesar, Asian and fruits.P1,850**

July 30(Monday)9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.(classroom A) **BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison** *Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. **P1,500**

July 30(Monday)2:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A)**CHEWY CHUNKY COOKIES by: Heny Sison** * Chocolate Chocolate y Chocolate Chip Cookies, Fudgie Wudgies, Dark Brown Choco Chips, Moist Chewy Oatmeal Cookies, Banana Nut Chocolate Chunkies and Baker's Best Snickerdoodles. **P1,500**

July 30-31(Mon.-Tue.)9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B) **NEW CLASS! CATERING I (Featuring Dessert Buffet) by: Chef Vicki Villanueva** Attention: All caterers, bakeshop, cafe owners and home entrepreneur - increase your sales. Learn the art and technique in creating a stunning dessert buffet. Organize the buffet based on a theme. Be guided of your choice of dessert to include to create a unified and exciting look. Guests will surely love sampling such tempting display of watering desserts **Recipes:** Chocolate Croquembuche, Chocolate Crème Brulee in Chinese spoon, Semi-Fredo Brownie, Black Forest Macaroon, Vanilla Macaroon, Mango & White Choco Truffle, Choco Mallows, Hazelnut Crinkles, Praline Truffle Tartlet, Lemon Beehives, Chocolate Brazo de Mercedes, Financier, Chocoblock Cake with Caramel, L' Opera Cake & Chocolate Cheesecake Cups. **P4,900**

July 31(Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) **SWEET BUT SUGAR FREE CAKES I by: Chef Jacqueline Ang Po** *Classic Desserts like Strawberry Cheesecake, French Apple Pie Chocolate Cake, Banana Chocolate Muffin, Poppy Seed Cake, Carrot Bars w/ Cream Cheese Icing, Chocolate Walnut Cookies. For people who are conscious of sugar intake. **P1,800**

FOR RESERVATIONS & INQUIRIES
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